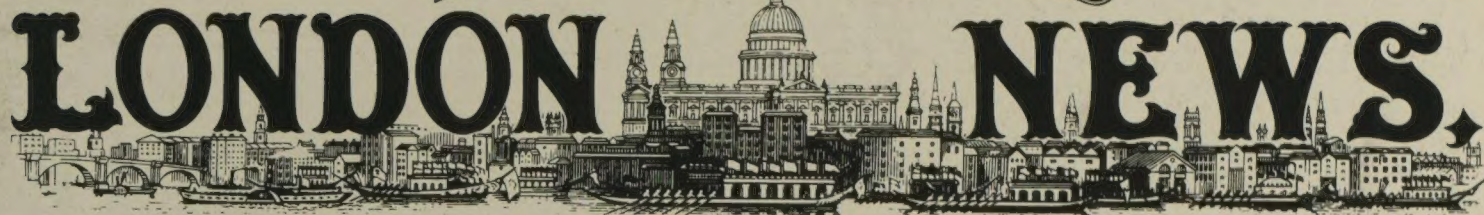


October 1988

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NUMBER 7083 VOLUME 276 OCTOBER 1988

COVER FEATURE

- 22 **WHAT HAS BECOME OF HARRODS?** Jeffrey Ferry investigates falling profits and tales of mismanagement

MAIN FEATURES

- 29 **THE HYPING OF ECSTASY** Who is behind London's latest drug craze? Max Prangnell visits clubland
- 34 **DOGMA VERSUS ARROGANCE** Nigel Lawson and Margaret Thatcher respect each other, it has been said, in the manner of elephants and rhinos. Andrew Rawnsley looks at their private war
- 44 **THE TUBE: A TALE OF NEGLECT AND STUPENDOUS INCOMPETENCE** Matthew Engel takes a trip on London's Underground...
- 48 **LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL** Many new proposals designed to ease the capital's traffic congestion wait for approval and finance. Michael Hamer assesses their chances of success
- 54 **FEAR, LOATHING AND AMATEURISM** Michael Watts meets eccentric traveller and author Redmond O'Hanlon
- 62 **SACRED COW: JACK-KNIFE OF ALL TRADES** Graham Vickers demonstrates the Swiss Army Knife
- 65 **SPORTING GRACE UNDER PRESSURE** Is high technology taking the sport out of competitive games? Matthew Fay investigates

REGULAR FEATURES

- 5 **EDITOR'S LETTER**
- 7 **READERS' LETTERS**
- 10 **THE MONTH** Compiled by Lora Savino
- 16 **SERPENTINE** Snaking its way round the capital
- 68 **FOOD & WINE** Matthew Fort finds food to fuel the heart; Kingsley Amis wishes Martin's would get it right
- 72 **TRAVEL: NO PROBLEM DESTINATION:** Novelist Jim Crace returns to Mauritius
- 102 **LETTER FROM MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE** Bill Thomas reports from Washington

ARTS

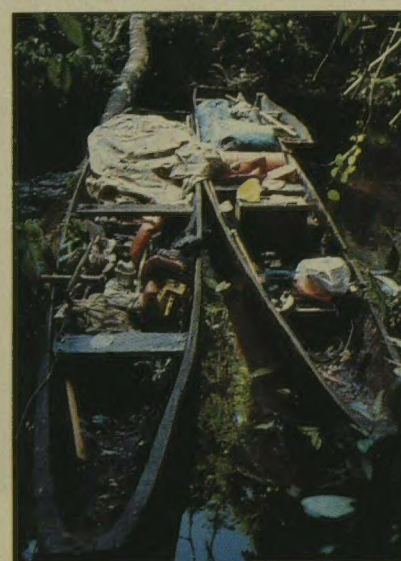
- 78 **OVERTURE** Ian Spink, one of the most original choreographers in Britain today, interviewed by Julia Pascal
- 85 **BY THE BOOKER** Patricia Miller enjoys the Booker prize gossip
- 86 **CINEMA** Nicholas Shakespeare reviews *Good Morning Vietnam*, *Five Corners* and *Bagdad Cafe*
- 87 **ART** James Hall on the latest exhibition of four contemporary painters at the Saatchi Collection—Bartlett, Fischl, Murray and Rothenberg
- 88 **BOOKS** Lewis Jones reads behind the hype of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*; James Bishop on Michael Holroyd's biography of George Bernard Shaw; Robert Blake on Geoffrey Howe



Half way to Ecstasy p29



Lawson, rhino or elephant p34



O'Hanlon's jungle fever p54



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Newstrade Distributor: S.M. Distribution, 6 Leigham Court Road, Streatham, London SW16 2PG. Telephone 01-677 8111. Subscription rates: UK £19.50 (\$34), USA £25 (\$43), Europe £28 (\$48), Canada £28 (Can\$61), rest of the world £32 (\$55). Typesetting and printing in England by Watmoughs Limited, Idle, Bradford; and London. Colour reproduction by Bridge Graphics Limited. Published at the office of *The Illustrated London News*, Laurence House, 91-93 Southwark Street London SE1 0HX. October, 1988. Agents for Australasia: Gordon & Gotch Ltd; branches: Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, Launceston and Hobart, Australia; Christchurch, Wellington, Auckland and Dunedin, New Zealand.

Editor's Letter

CAUSING A FUSS

There seems to be a rash of American journalists writing unfavourably about Britain. Bernard Nossiter, once a convinced Anglophile who went so far as to predict a healthy future for Britain's economy before anyone else thought of it, has turned on the British in a prolific series of articles that condemn our rudeness, complacency and hypocrisy.

Now Ray Moseley, until recently the *Chicago Tribune's* chief European correspondent, has written in the *Tribune's* magazine an article entitled "Why can't the English be more like us?" in which he describes the modern "scruffily dressed Britons, who slobbishly litter their streets with waste paper, plant the soles of their shoes on empty seats in subway cars, drink to excess in pubs and then throw up on the pavement."

His is a familiar vision of decline and social decay which is almost as familiar as the one that British journalists invoke of Chicago: the desperation of its housing projects and its ineradicable drug and racial problems.

Clearly part of the function of foreign correspondents is to reassure people at home that life is a lot worse abroad. This is easier to do by generalising about a country from the specific experience of a capital, where there are usually more obvious problems. I suspect Nossiter and Moseley were both talking about London.

I sympathise with one of Moseley's points about our stoicism, or what Anthony Burgess calls our "patient, philosophical resignation". How much better off London would be if its citizens acquired the sense of injustice that propels the Parisians and the Milanese to such vigorous agitation.

Perhaps the *ILN* should institute a very large award for people whose complaints effect change in the service given in restaurants, in the efficiency of bureaucracies, the speed of British Telecom and the Post Office etc. It might just be able to persuade Londoners that causing a fuss is precisely the opposite of an anti-social activity. Successful complaint improves the general lot.

Nothing deserves more excited complaint than the state of London's transport system. The *ILN* publishes two separate articles on the subject this month; one is a portrait of the London Underground, and the second is a rather more optimistic vision of the future. I am less hopeful than the author of the letter who discovered an array of plans for sinking roads under the Thames, plans for new tube lines and

plans for the re-introduction of trams. For one thing the plans are produced by a variety of different bodies, including private developers, and for another there is to be no single authority accountable to Londoners which is planning for the future.

The infrastructure of the city, as far as most authorities and this Government are concerned, can look after itself. There is simply an absence of real foresight. Investment is made in relieving problems rather than anticipating them. On the rare occasions that a large amount of money is spent on new project, it usually comes too late.



New York-style graffiti, London-style crowding, down the Tube

It took 42 years for the M25 to come into being, and within less than two it is blocked for a large part of the working day.

My own feeling is that London should opt for a more carefully planned version of the Milan solution. In August the city banned all private cars from the centre. They had to circumnavigate the city, which meant that the journey time from one side of Milan to the other increased by two or three hours. What should happen in London is this: a small area should become completely free of private cars and delivery vehicles during the daytime. Gradually the area would be expanded so that by, say, 1994 all of the West End and perhaps Knightsbridge and Kensington will be served only by public transport.

Nothing, however, will happen to the Greater London jam until people begin to agitate and complain.

PS. If readers are interested in my idea of setting up a prize for plaintiffs, please let me know.

Henry Porter

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READERS' LETTERS

SHOOT OUT

The answer to your recent question (*ILN*, August), "Have we forgotten Hungerford?" may be that many people, and perhaps the whole population, have cause to rue not only the murders but also their aftermath.

Your article made an honest attempt to give both sides, but it betrayed a feeling that Hungerford "proved" the need for yet more firearms controls. Perhaps you would care to consider some related points?

It has been impossible to get corrections made to the mass of misleading and sometimes untruthful information put out by the media. The public have been deceived and misled by almost all newspapers, by TV and, worst of all, by the connivance of public bodies. One example is the way people have been led to believe that self-loading rifles are capable of discharging 800 bullets in one minute—balderdash of course, yet one TV police-originated sequence "demonstrated" it. People familiar with firearms saw the trick, but how many were deceived?

To someone brought up on the philosophy of J. S. Mill, it is morally imperative that people are left free to do whatever they wish as long as they do not harm anyone else. If one set of people, be they shooters, collectors, painters, naturalists, gardeners or whatever, are legally hindered without necessity, the freedom of that society is lost. If some Jack-in-office says to me, "You can't have that because I say so", we are on the path to the Gulag.

**D. C. Sage,
Swansea, Wales.**

"How hard is it to buy a gun?" shows a lack of knowledge of and respect for British shooting sports that is sadly reminiscent of the media coverage of the incident itself, almost a year ago.

It is a pity that people still use the term Kalashnikov AK47 to describe Ryan's rifle. These guns have never been available to the British public. Ryan had a semi-automatic Chinese copy of the AK47.

The Firearms (Amendment) Bill does not "outlaw semi-automatic weapons", it outlaws semi-automatic rifles. This is a key point,

because, excepting Ryan, no criminal is on record as having used a semi-automatic rifle in a crime.

It is implied that the average licensed target shooter buys his firearm and then joins a club to



"hone his skills". This is not the case. When an application is made for a firearms certificate (i.e. for a pistol, rifle, etc) for target shooting, the police will look for club membership as evidence of the requirement an applicant has for each of the firearms in question.

It is wildly misleading to imply that "survivalism" has any significant connection with the shooting sports.

**Alex Kuiper,
The Shooting Foundation,
London W1.**

I was delighted with your article on Hungerford, as it is the only one I have seen that discussed both sides

of the gun control issue.

However, I would like to add that the article did not describe the current Firearms (Amendment) Bill and, worse, implied that it would increase the checks on firearms applicants. In fact, it does not alter the rules for granting a firearms certificate in any way, principally because it is impossible to make them any stricter.

**C. W. R. Phillips,
Guildford, Surrey.**

CLAMP SUPPORTER

I was slightly puzzled by the item in the August *Serpentine* column about wheel clamping of cars in London. Surely a driving instructor should know better than to park his car illegally, and therefore deserves to have it clamped when he leaves it in a silly place?

**D. J. Newman,
Epsom, Surrey.**

AIDS RESTRAINT

It was with some concern that I read "Breaking the AIDS Taboo" (*ILN*, September), which fell neatly into the accepted pattern of reporting on this disease.

First of all, we are told that "most sexually active people have never taken the HIV test". But why should they? A happily married couple, enjoying a harmonious, monogamous relationship, are not in the high risk category for

AIDS. Sexually promiscuous people are, but your author makes no distinction between the two.

Of course AIDS sufferers must be helped and one marvels at the courageous way in which so many of them are coming to terms with their terrible situation. Your article says as much, but there is no suggestion that, with the limited knowledge we have at present, a much stronger line should be taken on the whole subject of sexual promiscuity. Instead, all criticism is aimed at governments who are not spending sufficient money to enable the discovery of some miracle cure.

Health authorities do not hesitate to comment on the link between lung cancer and smoking, and we are being told in increasingly strong terms to stop smoking. Obese people are left in no doubt that being overweight endangers their health, indeed healthy eating is becoming almost compulsory. Alcoholics Anonymous demands a ruthless honesty from its members in acknowledging their addiction, and then slowly and painfully learning to live with the knowledge that even one drink a day is not for them. But on the subject of sexual fidelity, silence prevails. Why? Should not the human reproductive organs be treated with the same discipline and restraint as the lungs, heart and liver? I think so, and I feel that it is time for the media to give a stronger line in this direction.

**E. C. Dillistone,
Byfleet, Surrey.**

DRUG TESTING

London 100 years ago: *ILN*, October 6, 1888

It seems a "far cry" from a small jelly-fish to a man; but the acts of the former . . . resemble those actions which, in man, are performed independently of the will. Hence Dr Richardson proposed to discover, perchance, by experiment on the Medusae, the effects produced on human involuntary fibres by the administration of the drugs employed in the case of the jelly-fishes . . . Chloroform acts on the Medusae as on man . . . Chloroform seems to act first of all, not on the brain, but on the nerves and centres regulating involuntary movements. A substance called nitrita of amyl (now largely used for the relief of certain forms of heart disease) also seems, alike in man and in Medusae, to act primarily upon the nerves controlling such involuntary actions as those of heart, lungs, etc. Ether, well-known as an abolisher of consciousness, appeared . . . to exercise but little effect on the jelly-fishes. You can in fact, make one of these little Medusae insensible with ether, and in a few hours it recovers and swims about as lively as ever. These experiments demonstrate that even the gelatinous frame of a jelly-fish shows its own distinctive peculiarities with reference to the action of drugs.

"Breaking the AIDS Taboo" gave me pain. Not the quality of the writing, but the supreme arrogance expressed by the interviewees, particularly Derek Jarman.

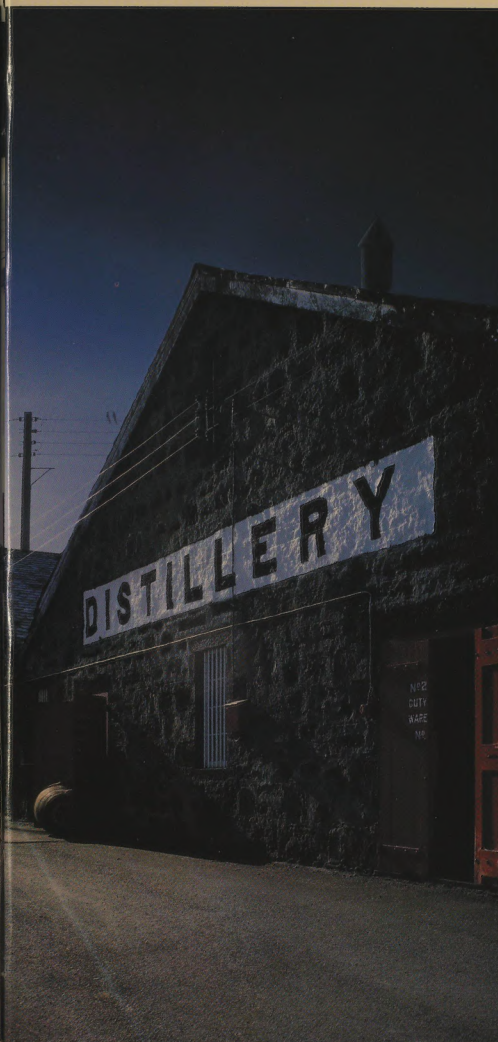
His proclivities and his talent may be an act of God, but he and his like do not understand convention as a civilising philosophy and pleasurable pursuit.

Their naïvety also indicates the danger of letting them loose: they don't realise taboos and hypocrisy are corner-stones of civilisation, ensure the bestowal of health on our children and keep man's darker side in check. As Joyce Grenfell used to say: 'Don't do that Derek, it's not nice.'

**Keith Hammond
Bardsey, Yorkshire**



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SINS OF EMISSION

Environmental issues lost their usual "minority interest" status this month as the plight of seals became headline news. Dutch scientist Dr. Albert Osterhaus formally identified the virus responsible for killing the seals as canine distemper but chemical waste in the North Sea was suspected of weakening the animals' immune systems. Of the many pollutants discharged into the sea, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) were most widely linked with the seals' deaths. Though emissions of PCBs were banned by the EEC 10 years ago, they are extremely resistant to natural degradation and high trace levels have been found in the seals' blubber.

With emotive pictures of dying pups in every newspaper, Richard Hinterleitner, captain of the *Karin B*, could not have picked a worse

time to approach Britain with his cargo of poisonous waste. Bowing to public pressure, junior environment secretary, Virginia Bottomley, was obliged to deny the ship entry on the grounds that the waste was not properly labelled. Many saw the move as pragmatic: repackaged, the *Karin B*'s cargo could be returned to Britain where the waste disposal industry is flourishing.

Meanwhile hundreds were killed and millions made homeless by catastrophic floods in Sudan and Bangladesh. Ecologists pointed to the deforestation of the highlands of northern Ethiopia and of the Nepalese Himalayas, respectively, as major causes of the disasters. Without trees to retain rainfall and top soil, it is feared that these countries may now be caught in flood-and-famine cycles, which could take generations to break.



A seal shows symptoms of the epidemic which has swept the North Sea

MONDAY, AUGUST 8

● Iran and Iraq agreed to stop fighting immediately, following the announcement of a formal ceasefire date of August 20 by UN Secretary General, Perez de Cuellar. Direct talks between the two began five days after the truce.

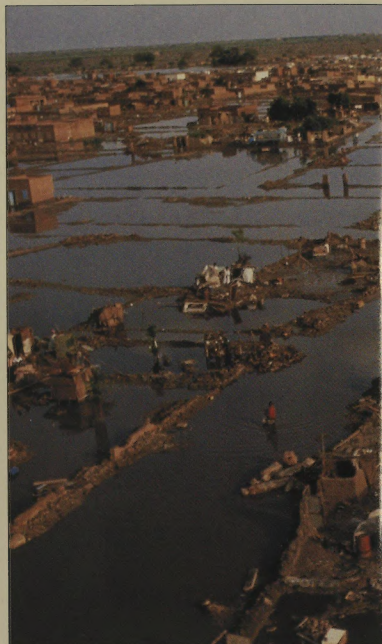
● Athlete Sebastian Coe failed to win selection for the British Olympic team.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 11

● Following a strike at North Manchester general hospital, in which nurses burned job description forms, the Department of



No port—even in a storm—for waste ship the *Karin B*



City of islands. Record rainfall in Sudan during the first week of August left

Health claimed a "clear majority" of sisters would get the G grading they expected rather than the lower F grading which entails only a 4.2 per cent salary increase. COHSE and NUPE leaders who had walked out of talks with the

Department of Health were not satisfied with the statement.

MONDAY, AUGUST 15

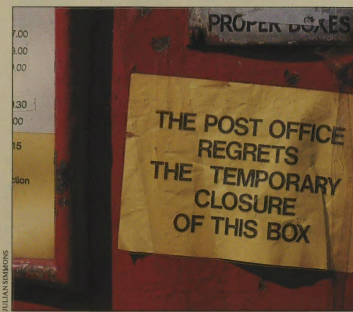
● Violent clashes between armed police and 3,000 South Korean students broke out for the third day at Yonsei University in Seoul. The students, who are demanding re-unification with North Korea, attempted to march to the border to rally with their northern counterparts but were prevented by road-blocks, tear gas and over 7,000 riot police.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 16

● Republican Presidential candidate, George Bush, chose 41-year-old senator Dan Quayle of Indiana as his running mate. The youthful Quayle, a staunch Star Wars supporter, was selected, in part, to appeal to women voters who had been showing a clear preference for Democrat, Dukakis.



Khartoum submerged and desperately short of clean water.



Signed, sealed but not delivered—strikes cripple the postal service

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17

● President Zia of Pakistan, who seized power in 1977, was killed when his plane exploded near Bahawalpur in eastern Pakistan. The US ambassador, Arnold Raphel, and at least 30 other officials and military leaders were also killed. Sabotage was widely suspected. A state of emergency was declared.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18

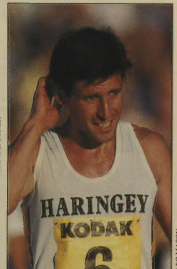
● George Bush's acceptance speech of the Republican nomination was overshadowed by accusations that his running mate, Dan Quayle, had used influential family contacts to avoid serving in the Vietnam war. In a television interview, Quayle admitted that "phone calls were made" to help get him into the National Guard which served almost exclusively within the United States.

the chase: an Italian boy shot by the robbers on August 17 and a pursuing policeman whose car collided with a lorry.

● In July, unemployment fell 58,500 to 2,313,900 and lending by banks and building societies increased by a record £9 billion.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 20

● Eight British soldiers were killed and 27 injured when a coach returning them to their barracks after leave in England was destroyed near Ballygawley, Co. Tyrone, by a 200lb IRA bomb.



Out of the Olympics, Seb Coe now hopes to run as a Tory MP

SUNDAY, AUGUST 21

● At least 500 people were killed and 3,000 injured when the strongest earthquake to hit the Himalayan foothills in over 50 years caused floods and landslides along the south-eastern stretch of the Indian/Nepalese border.

● In Prague, riot police clashed with about 1,000 protesters as up to 10,000 people marched through the city to mark the 20th anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. In Moscow more than 500 people staged a similar demonstration. 50 were arrested.

MONDAY, AUGUST 22

● The South African government banned the activities of the End Conscription Campaign in an attempt to crush resistance to compulsory military service. The ban followed a protest on August 3 by 143 young white men who refused to serve in the South African Defence Force.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 23

● Following the murder of a Royal Navy officer in Ostend by the IRA, armed forces minister, Archie Hamilton, announced that the distinctive number plates used on British servicemen's cars would be replaced with standard British plates.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24

● After a two-hour meeting with Mrs Thatcher, Northern Ireland Secretary, Tom King, announced that certain measures to counter-act IRA terrorism had been agreed, but would give no details. He also accused Colonel Gaddafi of Libya of supplying weapons and explosives to the IRA.

● As GCSE students awaited their results, Dennis Hatfield, chairman of the Joint Council for GCSE, pronounced the new exam a success because, he said, on average, grades were higher than in previous years and pupils had shown greater motivation.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25

● Britain suffered a record trade deficit of £2.15 billion in July, the government announced, prompting Chancellor Nigel Lawson to raise interest rates from 11 to 12 per cent.

● *The Last Temptation of Christ*, the controversial film by Martin Scorsese, considered blasphemous by religious activists in the United States, was passed without cuts by the British Board of Film Classification.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26

● Czechoslovak officials assured the Foreign Office that they had never knowingly supplied the IRA with Semtex—the odourless plastic explosive which was used in the Ballygawley bombing and which is produced exclusively in Czechoslovakia.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 27

● In a full-scale security operation, IRA man Robert Ross, who escaped from the Maze prison in 1983, was extradited from the Republic to Northern Ireland to complete his 20-year prison sentence. His extradition was marked by extensive IRA activity in Belfast and Londonderry.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 28

● Over 40 people were killed and 300 injured when three Italian jets taking part in an air show at



The burnt out wreckage of the army coach destroyed by an IRA bomb near Ballygawley, Co Tyrone. Eight soldiers

Ramstein, West Germany, collided in mid-air, sending debris and a fireball into the crowd of over 300,000.

● The Government authorised rewards of up to £100,000 for information on IRA activities. Previously the sums offered had varied between £5,000 and £40,000.

MONDAY, AUGUST 29

● Dutch scientists announced that the virus responsible for killing thousands of seals in the North Sea was canine distemper and confirmed that environmental pollution weakened the animals' immune systems.

● The Notting Hill Carnival—Europe's biggest street festival—

concluded peacefully, with reported crime down by more than 90 per cent on last year.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 30

● An SAS operation claimed the lives of three IRA men, one of whom had been linked with the Ballygawley coach bomb.

● Junior environment secretary, Virginia Bottomley, told the Italian ambassador that the cargo ship the *Karin B*, with its 2,000 tonne load of toxic chemical waste from Italy—originally illegally dumped in Nigeria—would not be allowed to berth at a British port. The ship anchored off Plymouth on August 29 after being refused entry by Spain, West Germany

and the Welsh port of Neath.

● England won its first Test victory in 19 matches, against Sri Lanka at Lord's.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31

● The first national postal strike for 17 years was staged by members of the Union of Communications Workers in response to the suggested payment of bonuses to new recruits in London

“We are waiting for the world to take pity on us. The crime the Iraqis have committed must reach the ears of the whole world.”

Kurdish refugee Salim Said on the Iraqi military offensive in Kurdistan.

and the south-east—areas of severe staff shortages.

● Following his first meeting with the authorities since the banning of the trade union Solidarity, Lech Walesa called for an end to the wave of strikes in Poland. He secured a promise from the government that it would discuss legalising the union.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

● The Turkish Prime Minister, Turgut Ozal, offered asylum to



died in the blast.

thousands of Iraqi Kurdish refugees fleeing from the Iraqi army, Iraq's military offensive against the Kurds—incorporating mustard gas attacks—began shortly after the Gulf ceasefire.

● Dr Julius Tomin, a Czech dissident and former visiting professor, secured his first academic post since coming to Britain in 1980: philosopher in residence in the Beehive public house in Swindon. His three-year contract, involving three lectures a year, was signed with landlord Neil Reilly who wanted “to strike a blow for civilised drinking amid growing pub yobism”.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

● Italian Ministers decided that the cargo of toxic waste on the *Karin B* would be returned to Italy for repackaging. They also agreed to ban exports of waste to the Third World in accordance with an EEC resolution.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

● Bangladeshi foreign minister, Rashed Choudhury, appealed for international aid as monsoon floods left millions in his country homeless and several hundred dead. “The human misery and suffering is unbearable,” he said.



London Zoo's Chia Chia—sent to Mexico this month to meet a new mate

● Nelson Mandela, who was transferred to Cape Town's private Constantiaberg clinic from Tygerberg hospital on August 31, told his former daughter-in-law, Rennie, that his left lung was functioning well after treatment.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

● The Electrical, Electronic Telecommunication and Plumbing Union was expelled from the Trades Union Congress for defying instructions to scrap two no-strike single-union agreements made with management at Orion

Electric, Port Talbot, and Christian Salveson, Warrington.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

● The inquest into the shooting of the three IRA terrorists in Gibraltar on March 6, opened in the colony's Supreme Court. The 11-man jury was told that at least six bullet wounds had been found in each body and that the SAS had fired 27 cartridges.

● The postal system came to a standstill as 74 out of 80 key sorting offices were closed by strike action.



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Long-haul flying can be draining no matter how comfortable the seats or how good the in-flight entertainment.

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A BREATH OF FRESH AIR





Observer person singular

What on earth is going on at the *Observer*? A group of grandees from the editorial staff of the newspaper is said to be so dissatisfied with the editorship of Donald Trelford that they are proposing to meet him and ask



Donald Trelford, *Observer* editor

him to resign. They believe that the paper has missed the opportunity to take on *The Sunday Times* and is now losing sales because of a failure in its direction and authority.

The composition of the group largely remains a secret but the frustration is known to be felt most acutely at the top. Naturally loyal employees such as Adrian Hamilton, foreign editor and son of the great editor of *The Sunday Times*, Sir Denis Hamilton; Bill Keegan, economics columnist; and Adam Raphael, editor of investigations, are all said to be disillusioned.

The source of their discontent is that nothing appears to change at the *Observer*. Despite its glamorous new surroundings in Battersea and the hope that it may go into trading profit this year, they believe the paper is making the same mistakes in emphasis and content that it was making five years ago.

True, it has launched another section, but so has every other quality Sunday newspaper.

It may be that the grandees will

be unsuccessful in their attempts to meet Trelford. He is one of the most deft politicians in journalism, easily able to avoid such confrontations. Such is his reputation for evasion that lower down the newspaper's hierarchy, reporters have considered writing to the *Jim'll Fix It* programme (which makes the fantasies of young BBC viewers come true) to ask the host, Jimmy Savile, if he can arrange for them to meet their editor.

Even if the grandees do manage to meet him, it is unlikely that Trelford would quietly pack his bags and vacate his office. In the past he has fought some highly successful campaigns—against Robert O. Anderson, the previous proprietor, and against Rupert Murdoch, who said: "The biggest mistake I ever made was underestimating Trelford. We had a meeting and then he went off and organised the opposition." He is a survivor *par excellence* and has even managed to forge a working relationship with Mr Tiny Rowland, having originally opposed his ownership.

He will not be intimidated by a group of worthy executives wringing their hands, talking about quality and asking him to do the decent thing. Besides, he has the support of the proprietor. While on holiday in the Mediterranean this year, Trelford and his wife were asked aboard Rowland's yacht. During the visit Rowland let it be known that he was perfectly happy with Trelford's editorship and that he would be at a loss to know what to do without him. At a board meeting early in September, Trelford was wholeheartedly backed.

This vote of confidence has left the grandees in a very gloomy mood and they are now considering another option. That is to offer a package of their services to Andreas Whittam Smith, editor of *The Independent*, who is setting up a new Sunday paper which aims to take readership from both *The Sunday Times* and the *Observer*.

Murder in cold blood

An anecdote about Truman Capote that has escaped the searching pen of his biographer, Gerald Clarke, concerns his hatred of a neighbour's dog. During the writing of his final book, Capote was driven to distraction by the yapping of a terrier on a roof garden adjacent to his New York apartment.

He became so obsessed with the dog that he dropped his writing and began to plan the dog's demise. First, Capote befriended the terrier by throwing tit-bits over to the roof garden. He aimed the morsels of chocolate and meat farther and farther away from the safety of the roof so that the dog had to leap to catch them. Eventually it plunged to its death.

Later the same day his neighbour appeared on the roof top and shouted to Mr Capote who was enjoying a quiet cigarette, "Have you seen my dog?" Without a



Truman Capote: Doggone angry

flicker of emotion, Capote shouted back, in his squeaky Southern accent:

"The last time I saw your dog he was standing on the edge looking depressed."

Mystery of the missing blackmailers

A group of Metropolitan police officers were chewing the cud about trends in crime. They wondered why blackmail had all but passed into history as a crime in Britain. Only one or two cases now reach the criminal courts whereas in the past blackmail was the courts' staple diet. One officer ventured that society now permitted more, and that it followed that there was less with which to blackmail people. Another hit upon what we fancy is the right answer: "Nobody bothers with blackmail now because all they have to do is go and sell their story to the newspapers—it's quicker and it's legal."

Catty about Kitty

The American presidential election always provides work for a number of low investigators and snoops, who are required to dig up dirt from the candidates' pasts.

So far the majority of unpleasantness resulting from these inquiries has been aimed at George Bush and Dan Quayle. Bush has been accused of consorting with some shady figures and Quayle's behaviour during the Vietnam war has been portrayed as rather less than heroic.

Since the protracted campaign during which it was suggested that he was mad and incapable because he may have been treated for depression, the Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis has got off relatively lightly. This may not last. There are two stories which *Serpentine's* sources in Washington expect to emerge as the election warms up. Both concern Mrs Kitty Dukakis. The first is drawn from

her husband's medical records, and the second comes in the shape of a photograph which is said to show her watching the American flag being burnt during an anti-Vietnam war demonstration.



Mr and Mrs Dukakis: harmonious

Plotting in Hackney Empire

A fight for the soul of the Royal Institute of British Architects is about to take place. Following the RIBA council's decision to nominate Max Hutchinson to succeed Rod Hackney as President, a rumour has reached Serpentine suggesting that Mr Hutchinson will be strongly opposed by the membership and indeed by some of RIBA employees. One press officer said, "I would rather leave than sweep up after a man who speaks before he thinks."

The press office was in a different mood when we rang. "Ah! No, no, no. I don't think anyone could say that about Max. He is really very media conscious. He is very, very good indeed."

We waited a few more moments.

"Really, off the record he is very good indeed."

Would there be a challenge?

"Oh, yes, very likely. There are two names. We have to wait and see if they accept nomination."

Doubtless this will be encouraging to some. Until Owen Ludor discovered a previously unused clause in the constitution of RIBA, all council nominations had been accepted automatically. Since then, all challenges have been successful.

New options open for Gowrie

One of the more talented men to slip through the fingers of Mrs Thatcher was Lord Gowrie, chairman of Sotheby's since 1986. Unusually, they did not part because of political differences. They parted because Lord Gowrie claimed he was incapable of living on his salary of £33,000 as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

It was an ill-judged and tactless remark and the Establishment was astounded that Gowrie was putting income before political satisfaction. Jim Prior, now Lord Prior, said at the time: "If he had stayed he could have become Secretary of State for Education. He had the best brains of anyone in the Government. I think it would be a great disappointment if he didn't come back."

Lord Prior should be pleased. For Grey Gowrie is actively considering a return to politics and it is understood that Mrs Thatcher would welcome him. Aside from anything else, this Cabinet lacks intellectual weight. With the exception of Howe, Lawson and possibly Baker, they are rather an unimaginative and unrounded bunch.

There are other reasons for the speculation. The first is that being chairman of Sotheby's demands



Lord Gowrie: back to the State?

an average of 12 hours' dedicated work a day. This approaches a minister's burden.

The second, and more important, reason is that Gowrie has now made a great deal of money. His salary is thought to be more than £100,000, and after the rearrangement of Sotheby's ownership he now owns some £75,000 option shares which will make him

at least £750,000. So, it would appear that he can afford to take the State's salary, however piffling it may seem.



Jerry Hall: enough of Jagger?

Undiluted gossip

Serpentine rarely indulges in superstar gossip, but we break tradition now by bringing you the news that Jerry Hall and Mick Jagger have fallen out to the degree that they are having a trial separation. The relationship, which has produced two exceptionally beautiful children, is suffering from familiar strains that affect such affairs.

Miss Hall, who recently made a reasonably successful stage debut, finds Mr Jagger's increasingly right-wing views irritating. There is also the question of his legendary parsimony. Jagger in his old age is far from being the free-wheeling, free-spending rock star. Miss Hall is, of course, able to cater very well for her own expenditure. She is still one of the best-paid and best-used models working on either side of the Atlantic. (She adorns this month's issue of *Riva* magazine in a bride's veil, which would doubtless annoy Mr Jagger.)

The separation will come to an end at Christmas when Miss Hall and the children visit Australia where Jagger will be making a feature film.

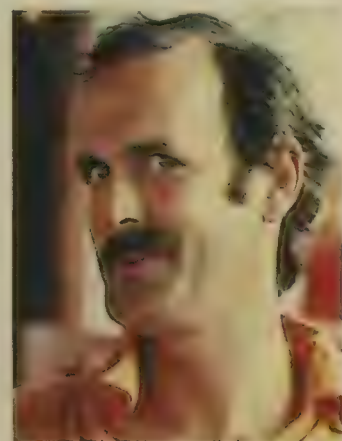
Prose and cons at the ICA

During the last two months the Institute of Contemporary Arts has exhibited the work of six architectural practices which, "find

their work realised more on paper or through modest interior projects than as part of the building boom".

Reading on in the programme, it is not difficult to see why these six unsung firms have found little outlet for their work. It says, "the spectrum of ideas represented here—the zero degree minimalism of Zaha Hadid's constructivist speculations, Future System's visionary explorations into High Tech, or Arad's Low Tech organic gadgetry—provides a metaphor for the heterogeneity of the modern city. Neither naively utopian nor prescriptive, each practice embraces the city's chaos, its spectacles and speculation."

Bottles of champagne will be awarded for similar examples of architectural gobbledegook.



John Cleese: happy ending

Wanda full

All film directors and actors complain that their films are destroyed by the financiers and their slavishly commercial view of life and art. The British comedian John Cleese, who stars in *A Fish Called Wanda*, is an exception. MGM, which financed the film, insisted that the ending be rewritten and re-shot. He agreed. The film was greatly improved and is now showing at 1,000 cinemas in the US. Without the change the movie would not have been seen by a tenth of its current audience.

Capital value

The great work of the economist Sir John Hicks, *Value and Capital*, has been published in the Soviet Union. Sir John, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics in 1972, was presented with the Russian edition during the 50th anniversary celebrations of

the book last month in Bologna.

Value and Capital has been in print since just before the war and has been translated into as many languages as Keynes's *General Theory*. Sir John, who published the book in his mid-30s, had anticipated some of the elements of Keynes's work. The idea of "liquidity preference" appeared in a book review published well before the *General Theory* appeared. In academia minds often work in parallel, but only



Sir John Hicks, Nobel polymath

one of them gets the credit due.

Sir John has never overly concerned himself with matters of credit nor indeed with the intemperate economic fashions of the day. He has preferred to take a historical approach, and also gently to point out that economic truths are more complicated than the dogmatic adherents of Keynes or monetarism believe.

What is interesting about Sir John, who is now 84 years old, is the extraordinary breadth of the

knowledge. He has a prodigious memory that unfailingly recalls whole sections of Dante in the original Italian, the obscure details of the French Revolution, or the minutiae of Labour's economic policy just after the war. He has one of the most restless and fascinating minds in Britain.

Sir John has just completed another book which will be published next year. The Russians will probably be quicker off the mark this time.

A dreadful day out

SHOPPERS' RUN TO PURGATORY

Swingers only please, on the top deck of the "Shoppers' Express". This flat-fronted, state-of-the-art double decker, the pride of London Regional Transport's fleet, leaves Holloway every Saturday at 9am for its weekly run to Milton Keynes shopping centre—a trip which costs £3 return and takes about two hours each way.

And on the top deck, at no extra charge, music selected by the driver is broadcast continuously to ease passengers into the spirit of the expedition. Capital Radio seems popular. So, as the bus made its way northwards through Seven Sisters and a dozen London stops, as it passed through Enfield and Waltham Cross and out onto the M1, the landmarks of the journey were viewed to the accompaniment of some of the enduring classics of pop. The Coral Bay Fish Bar and the Ottoman Kebab House were both perfectly offset by numbers from Grease, while the Smurfs song did its best to lend glamour to the Belling Cooker factory.

Surface noise on the M1 soon reduced this mood-enhancer to an irritating crackle, but none of the 35 or so passengers, about half the bus's total capacity, appeared to mind. The motorway stretched ahead and they settled down into the resigned trance which in the British shopper is a sign of pleasant anticipation. Some munched buttered scones and gazed vacantly over their nylon shopping bags.

Everyone looked normal enough. But, clearly, beneath the anoraks and suede-finish overcoats, beneath the tweed caps and tidy perms, something must have been wrong. This is an outing for the profoundly desperate, the plainly perverse: an outing for the sort of person who looks forward with eagerness to the new Argos shopping catalogue, or who will debate at length the merits of a plain-coloured thermos over a tartan one. None but the seriously disturbed would voluntarily embark on it. Not only is the journey itself tedious and depressing, but the destination is barely worth crossing the street for, let alone the country.

There is nothing in Milton Keynes shopping centre that cannot be found on most London streets. The shops are mundane—Boots, Etam, Woolworth's, MK DIY store—and there can be no qualitative difference between a packet of cream crackers purchased here and one bought in Kilburn. Even in the "specialist arcade", with its natural beauty store, and



its branch of Forbidden Planet, the comics shop, there is little to merit the two-hour ordeal by the "Shoppers' Express".

Nor is the interior of the shopping centre stimulating enough to distract from the banality of the merchandise. Opened in 1979, it simply looks old-fashioned today. There are no banks of escalators rising higher and higher to new temptations, there is no clever lighting, no gleaming brass. All the shops are on one level, the plants in the oblong boxes look tired and uninspiring, and the only fountain—in Queen's Court—is placed

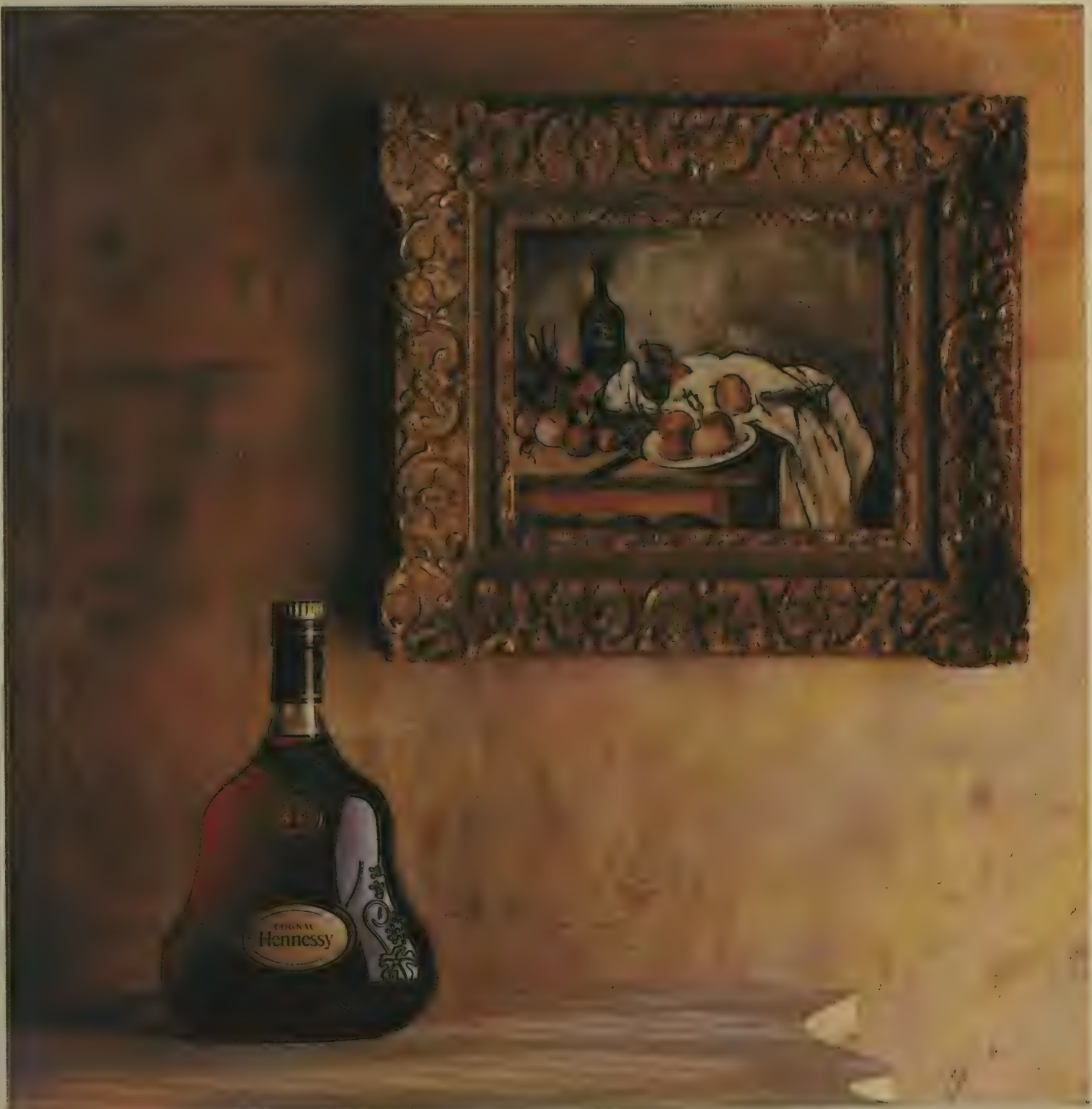
conventionally out of doors rather than inside. There is none of the vulgar pizzazz of more recent shopping developments inspired by transatlantic extravagances. In short, the Milton Keynes shopping centre is so dull that it is not even tasteless.

A recent survey into population and economic trends, released by Mintel Publications, found Milton Keynes to be the most productive of all Britain's boom towns, and on a Saturday afternoon in the shopping centre that is easy to believe. The rustically named passageways—Acorn Walk and Midsummer Arcade—are packed. There are small children everywhere. In Milton Keynes everyone seems to have their regulation 2.4, even pensioners.

Middleton Hall, outside the John Lewis store, has been entirely surrendered to the ubiquitous infants. There is an "Adventure Castle", a fluorescent pink skating rink made of high-density plastic, and a crèche run by the Early Learning Centre. As a result the precinct has the air of an out-of-control children's party. Its lofty glass ceilings and concrete floors seem to amplify sound, so that the whole place rings with shouts and screams like an indoor swimming pool or, more appropriately perhaps, like the reptile house of London Zoo. Added to this are the regular lost-child announcements from the tannoy, "Will Michele from Chingford please report to the information desk."

Any Londoner who even momentarily contemplates a shopping trip to Milton Keynes should immediately banish the thought. He can save himself the time and the fare by staying in London where there is far more sophistication on offer. Perhaps the only loss is the joy of returning home after enduring what Milton Keynes calls "Europe's finest shopping experience" ●

LORA SAVINO



TO PRESERVE
THE CONDITION OF
A CEZANNE
IT SHOULD BE KEPT AT
A CONSTANT 65°F.

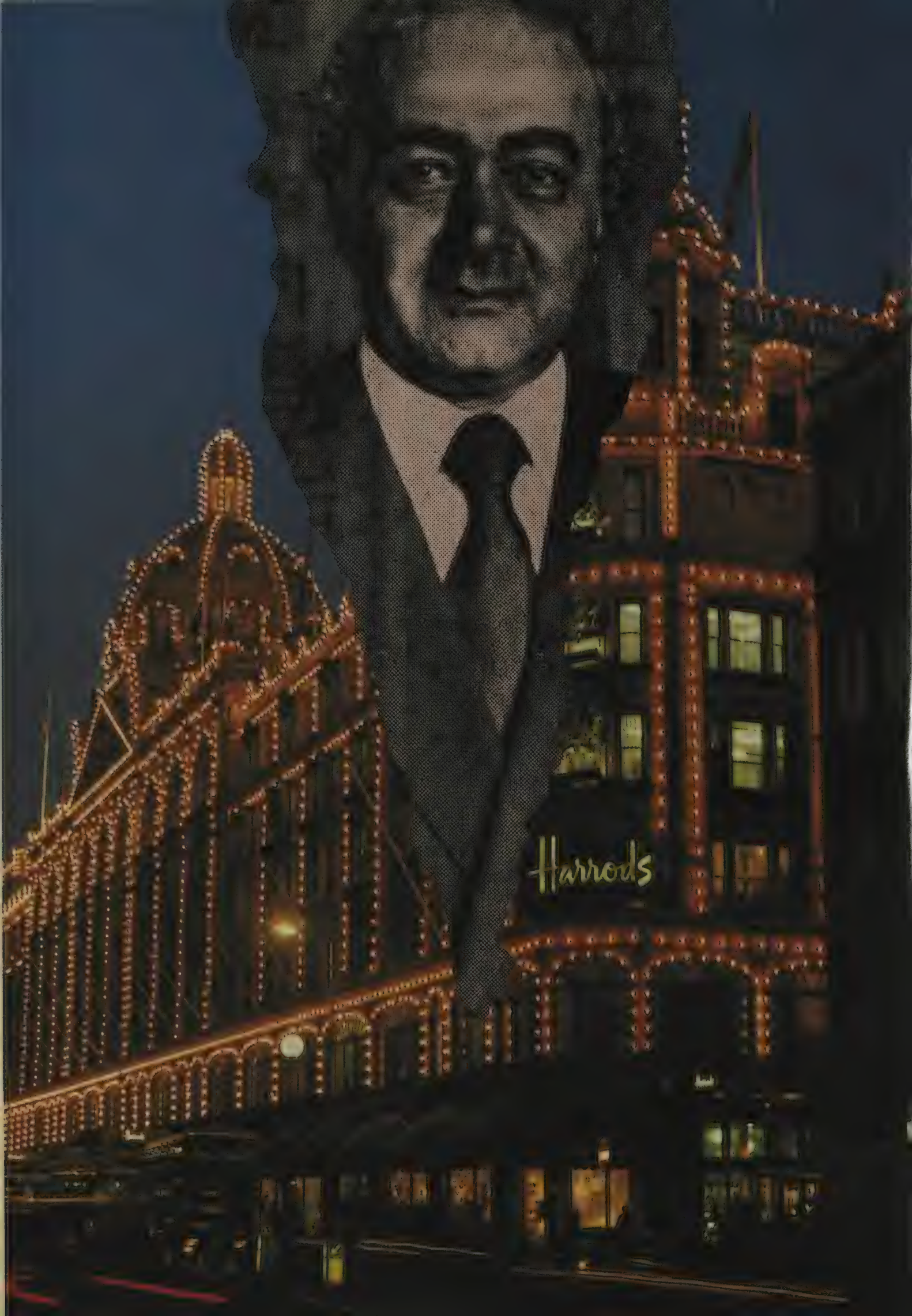
DISPLAY IT
IN THE SAME ROOM AS
YOUR HENNESSY X.O

COGNAC
Hennessy



LOW TAR As defined
Warning: SMOKING CAN CAUSE LUNG CANCER,
Health Departments'

by H.M. Government
BRONCHITIS AND OTHER CHEST DISEASES
Chief Medical Officers



WHAT HAS BECOME OF HARRODS?

By Jeffrey Ferry

The manner of the Al Fayed's acquisition of Harrods has absorbed the business community. But how has it been managed over the last few years? Have the promised improvements been made? Is it really still the Top People's store?

At Harrods, every member of staff at or above the rank of Senior Salesperson wears a red carnation in his or her buttonhole. Within the great store's elaborate hierarchy, it is an important symbol of status. The red carnation is plastic. Earlier this year, a very important Harrods' customer, the Sultan of Brunei, visited the store. A special effort was made on the sales floors to present the store's best face: stocks of all the best goods replenished, displays shined and polished, and staff were on their best behaviour. On that very special day, the plastic carnations were replaced with real ones.

Harrods is becoming more and more like those plastic carnations: a world of illusory luxury. For things are not all they should be in the Brompton Road. Management appears to be uncertain with senior executives coming and going at amazing speed. (In one notable instance, a senior executive was hired and then paid off to resign before she even started work.) Major policy decisions at the store are made and, sometimes abruptly reversed, the costly and much-publicised refurbishment programme is on hold, and staff morale is low.

Stories of mismanagement are borne out by the financial facts: according to figures the company has to file with the British Government, Harrods pre-tax profits have fallen substantially from their 1985 peak. In 1987, for the first time in memory, Harrods' profits fell below those of its Oxford Street rival Selfridges—despite the fact that Selfridges' turnover is just half that of Harrods. Selfridges: pre-tax profit of £28.5 million on turnover of £165m. Harrods: £25.6m profit on £323.5m.

The three Al Fayed brothers took over the House of Fraser group in March 1985 for £615 million. The complicated circumstances of the takeover are the subject of a Department of Trade and Industry inquiry whose conclusions were still secret at the time of our going to press. It is unclear why the Al Fayed brothers wanted House of Fraser's motley empire of over 100 stores. Since the acquisition, they have closed or sold off more than 20, and city rumours have long suggested that they may well seek to sell the rest once threats of government investigation are over. What is clear is that Mohammed Al Fayed, 55, the eldest brother and the dominant business force among them, was keen to own

Harrods.

The researches into the Al Fayed's past appear well-documented and convincing: Mohammed was born in Alexandria, Egypt, of humble origins. He made money in various businesses in Egypt and then Haiti, and settled in Britain in 1965. In the UK, he made money by acting as an agent on high-priced foreign trade deals involving the government of Dubai and the Sultan of Brunei.

Like many immigrants to Europe, Mohammed fell under the spell of the Old Continent's rich culture and tradition. Most of his investments in the 1980s seem aimed at helping him insinuate himself into the bone-china worlds of high fashion, aristocracy, and royalty. Last year, President Mitterrand gave him the French *Légion d'Honneur* for his work restoring the Paris Ritz Hotel and The Mill, former home of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

He sees his purchase of Harrods as an opportunity to make a lasting contribution to Britain's rich heritage, by turning Harrods into, in Mohammed's own phrase, "a palace of romance, fantasy, and history" which would

naturally reflect well on him.

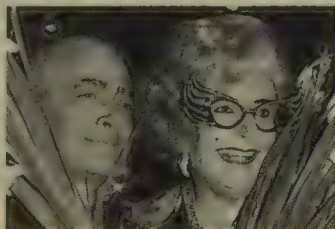
To make his dream reality, Mohammed turned to a successful British-born Australian retailer, Brian Walsh. Walsh had won a reputation for his successful management of David Jones, Australia's most luxurious department store chain. In July 1986, Walsh came to London as chief executive of both House of Fraser and Harrods. It is unclear why one man thought he could do both jobs. It is reported that Walsh exacted demanding terms from Mohammed, including a very generous pay package, before he would consider leaving Australia. With a handful of close associates from Sydney, Walsh set about a complete overhaul of both Harrods and the Fraser chain. His obvious lack of respect for the way the business had been run before antagonised many of the staff.

"On his first day at the House of Fraser," reports a senior buyer who has since left, "Walsh called a meeting of 175 people and announced that he didn't believe in merchandising or in the view that the buyer was king. At a stroke, he wiped out years of enthusiasm and morale."

At Harrods too, he attacked the buyers' power. Buyers had previously had responsibility for their own selling departments, with offices in or adjacent to their departments. Walsh decreed a separation between buying and selling. All buyers were moved to a new buyers' area on Harrods' fifth floor. This was a momentous change in the conservative institution, where respect for tradition and hierarchy verged on the reverential. Harrods staff saw no advantage in this change, many believing Walsh was simply copying methods from his Australian experience without asking if they were appropriate to Harrods. Many unhappy buyers departed.

Walsh was indeed determined in the pursuit of his goals. But that wasn't the real problem. The real problem was that the chairman of Harrods never allowed his chief executive to get on with the job. Mohammed came to most board meetings. Although chairman, he let Walsh take the chair, leaving himself free to come in whenever he wanted. Detailed discussions of the business bored the restless Egyptian. "He saw himself as an ideas and big concepts man," reports one former board

Things are not all they should be in the Brompton Road . . . senior executives are coming and going at amazing speed . . . staff morale is low



member. Nevertheless, he got involved in quite minor points of management. A favourite theme of his was that Walsh should strive to make Harrods a model of excellence and first-class service on a par with the Paris Ritz. For Mohammed, part of that excellence was the uniforms worn by Paris Ritz staff. Walsh, supported by virtually the whole of the store, resisted Mohammed's campaign for storewide uniforms at Harrods. "The man had a uniform fixation," groans a former senior executive.

As 1987 wore on, Mohammed's interference increased. He took an enthusiastic interest in the refurbishment programme, masterminded by Walsh's right-hand man. Merchandise Director Dwane McHolick, right down to the smallest details of the gargantuan £200 million programme. Walsh and McHolick's resentment grew. Colleagues noticed that Walsh began planning his calendar so that the half days he spent at Harrods would not overlap with Mohammed's visits to the store. In October 1987, the break finally came. Walsh and McHolick left, in circumstances that neither will comment on. (They are both back in Sydney, self-employed.)

There followed the most turbulent and confused period in the store's long history. Mohammed appointed himself chief executive of Harrods, bringing in Michael Ellis-Jones to run the store on a day-to-day basis. Ellis-Jones had done an excellent job running Harvey Nichols until early 1987, when he was lured over to House of Fraser as Merchandise Director. Working closely with Walsh, Ellis-Jones's emphasis on glamour and high-priced designer labels for a large chain, stretching from Devon to Scotland, where they were patently inappropriate, had driven away many of the Fraser chain's top buyers. At Harrods, Ellis-Jones ought to have been more at home. He lasted just over two months. Now self-employed, he refuses to comment on the circumstances of his departure. His most lasting contribution to Harrods was in the form of a

The modern elegance of the refurbished men's department only serves to emphasise the out-dated tattiness of the women's departments



quote, uttered to junior staff just before he departed: "You can't run this place like a harem. The men aren't eunuchs and the women aren't serfs."

The Christmas 1987 selling period at Harrods was below expectations. In response, Mohammed abruptly changed tack. Suddenly, extravagance and luxury were out and economies and prudent management were in. Ellis-Jones was replaced with Paul Taylor, formerly of the Fraser group's Dickins and Jones, a relatively successful but far more downmarket store. A "cost-cutter" one former associate says of Taylor. Mohammed also brought former Harrods chief executive Alex Craddock back from retirement to play an advisory role.

The key problem Walsh had attacked at Harrods was the store's overdependence on the

volatile tourist trade. He planned to lure high-spending British women back to the store by restoring its reputation as London's leading retailer of high fashion. To this end, he hired Harvey Nichols's fashion supremo Clare Stubbs as Harrods' Fashion Director. In an incisive piece of journalism, the *Tatler's* Fiametta Rocco highlighted the central role Stubbs was to play in the renaissance of Harrods. Stubbs was quoted speaking glowingly about the impending first floor refurbishment. The miles of aluminium racks would be out, she told Ms Rocco, and new designer names in. Soon after, Stubbs scored a major triumph when she signed up designer sensation Christian Lacroix for Harrods. Today, with Lacroix's clothes hanging forlornly off the same old aluminium racks, against pink plasterboard walls, under 1970s-style blazing chrome spotlights, one has to wonder if this is what Mr Lacroix envisaged when he signed the deal.

Last summer, Stubbs was quietly demoted. She is now responsible only for designer names. John Cranwell-Ward, another transfer from Dickins and Jones, is the new Fashion Director, with responsibility for the majority of ladies' fashion.

Asked for a comment about her new role, Stubbs agreed to see us at her office on September 1. On August 31, Harrods' chief press officer Andrew Wyles called to say we would not be permitted to talk to Ms Stubbs. A former colleague of Clare Stubbs at Harvey Nichols (they moved within weeks of each other, both for enormous salary rises), Wyles cannot have enjoyed placing the gag on his colleague.

Walsh's overhaul of buying has also been reversed. Buyers are now being moved back to their selling departments, and other uses found for the fifth floor buying area.

In interviews a year ago, Mohammed was reportedly "leaping" around his office with excitement, talking about Harrods' massive five-year refurbishment plan, worth an alleged £200 million. There were reports that he had bought an entire marble quarry in Italy expressly for Harrods. Today, the refurbishment seems to be on indefinite hold. One or two projects, including the Banking Hall, are being completed. Wyles denies the refurbishment programme has been postponed. Asked what work is about to commence, he replies: "Two fire stairs." The modern elegance of the refurbished men's department only serves to emphasise the out-dated tattiness of the (far more important in sales terms) women's departments on the first floor.

Problem Number One at Harrods is that Mohammed Al Fayed is a man of iron whim. "He's the sort of man," says one former employee, "who will come in one morning and say I want all the walls painted green, come in the next morning and say why aren't they done yet, and then three days later come in and ask you why you've painted all the walls green."

Mohammed Al Fayed is a man of inspiration and short-lived enthusiasm, a man of bold gestures rather than consistent application.

One London retailer spent over a year negotiating with Harrods. They approached him, eager to have his brand in the store. With terms of the deal constantly changing, and senior executives unwilling to move without



Mohammed Al Fayed: under the spell of the Old Continent's rich culture and tradition

consulting Mohammed, he finally broke off the negotiations in frustration. "There is a complete lack of continuity in policy," he reports. "Its incredibly unprofessional."

Just as Paul Taylor was settling in to his new job, a new recruit arrived. Having tried unsuccessfully to harness the retailing talents of Australia, Mohammed had turned now to New York. Terry Schaefer, formerly of Bloomingdale's, is now Harrods' Merchandise Director, and Mohammed's current blue-eyed boy. Who is Terry Schaefer, how did Mohammed find him, and how important was he to the success of New York's most famous department store? Nobody at Harrods seems to know. "With Mohammed, you often get the feeling that his ideas are only as good as the last person he had dinner with," comments one former Harrods man.

It did not take long for Schaefer's influence to be felt. The quarterly Harrods' *Magazine* was started and sponsored personally by Mohammed as a means of publicising the store. With ex-*Vogue* contributing editor Drusilla Beyfus as editor, it was an impressively professional fashion glossy, using some of the world's top photographers, stylists, and models. Encumbered with less than objective features on Mohammed's charity works or his friendship with the royal family, the writing was nevertheless of high quality. Ms Beyfus herself seemed to be close to Mohammed. The chairman dropped in to her office regularly to chat over the fashion scene.

At one time Terry Schaefer worked on Bloomingdale's Christmas catalogues, and he believes strongly in their importance as a retailing tool. He arrived at Harrods in March. Three days later, the entire staff of the *Magazine* were called in and told they were fired with immediate effect and without severance pay, except for two who were to work on the new catalogue. (They were subsequently granted two week's severance pay.) Ms Beyfus however had a one-year contract, which Harrods refused to honour. She is currently suing Harrods for the balance of her contract, £36,000.

Mohammed's treatment of Ms Beyfus mystifies people in the fashion business. Manifestly good at her job, seemingly a friend and confidante, she is also well-connected in the fashion world where Harrods can always use friends.

"This is England," comments one fashion publisher. "You just don't treat people like that."

Problem Number Two at Harrods is that Mohammed Al Fayed has imported the business ethics of international dealmaking into his department store. In that cut-throat world, promises, contracts, favours, friends, and associates are all employed and discarded as and when necessary in pursuit of the big deal. The numbers are so big that a successful agent can always afford to buy his way out of any minor commitments he makes. This attitude to staff has wreaked havoc at Harrods, where previously old-fashioned values like loyalty and keeping one's word took a high (perhaps too high) priority. Three stories illustrate that not all is well in the Knightsbridge store:

● In June this year, the *Daily Mirror* alleged that a prostitution ring was operating in the



There was a momentous change in the institution, where respect for tradition and hierarchy had verged on the reverential. Harrods' staff saw no advantage.



Harrods perfumery department. The report, beginning on the front page of the *Daily Mirror* and continuing in the centre pages, caused much anger at Harrods. Harrods believed that the newspaper implied that the women's activities were tacitly condoned by the store, although the article emphasised that the women were employed by the perfume manufacturers on an *ad hoc* basis. Soon after the report appeared Harrods issued a writ against the *Daily Mirror*.

● In August this year, Derek St Clair Ward, Director of Development at Harrods, was charged by the Metropolitan Police Fraud Squad with taking rewards in exchange for awarding contracts to a building firm. Ward's kickbacks are alleged to have included a Range Rover and £19,500 in cash. Trial is expected later this year. According to informed sources at the store, Ward was hired by Mohammed early in 1987.

● Mr Tiko Alalouff of Pinner, west London, ran a design company called Orchard Designs which went into liquidation last August as a



result, he claims, of unpaid debts from the company managed by the Al Fayeds. Early in 1987, Alalouff was asked to submit designs for the complete remodelling of the Dorchester Hotel by the hotel's Director of Refurbishment. The Dorchester is owned by the Sultan of Brunei and managed by the Al Fayeds. Alalouff's succinct brief was to draw up a plan for "the best hotel in the world". Alalouff's team spent several weeks inside the Dorchester, measuring and sketching.

On April 4, 1987, Alalouff presented his designs, samples, and cost estimates. The meeting lasted 2½ hours. At the end, the man told him they were the best he'd seen. He said that once they were shown to "His Majesty" (the Sultan), Alalouff could expect a minimum of £30 million work on the Dorchester's projected £200 million refurbishment.

An energetic cheerful little man, Alalouff displays an almost childlike enthusiasm recalling the man's praise for his designs: "superb", "magnificent", and so on. "This work for me would have been my life's ambition—and possibly it would have meant retiring a little bit early," he says.

It had never occurred to Alalouff to ask the man for a written contract guaranteeing his expenses. Things are not done that way. His company went into liquidation



Bulgarian-born Alalouff, 55, had worked in the design business in Britain for two decades, winning the Queen's Award for Industry in 1972 for his work designing more than 200 English pubs in dozens of countries around the world. In 1982, he had his second heart attack and second bout of open heart surgery. His wife and doctor were urging him to take early retirement. The Dorchester job seemed a Godsend.

For three months, Alalouff heard nothing from the man at the Dorchester. When he finally reached him on the phone, the man had transferred to Harrods. Without offering an explanation, he told Alalouff the Dorchester work was off, adding there might be some work at Harrods. They made an appointment. Alalouff duly arrived at Harrods, where




Tiko Alalouff, left, was asked to submit designs for the refurbishment of the Dorchester, above, managed by the Al Fayeds

he was met by a security guard. The guard told him that the design director was away on business. Producing a large trunk containing Alalouff's designs the guard said he was instructed to ask Alalouff to take them away.

Alalouff tried in vain for months to recover the £70,000 his designs had cost him. The Dorchester and Harrods both disavowed knowledge of their design director's commitment. A veteran of the business, it had never occurred to Alalouff to ask the man for a written contract guaranteeing his reimbursement for his expenses. Things are not done that way in Britain. Alalouff's company went bust in August. "My lawyers tell me to forget about it," he says. "A little man like me is powerless against a financial empire like the Al Fayeds."

It would be extreme to say that Harrods is in a critical state, or that the great landmark of Knightsbridge is about to disappear, but the most famous store in Britain is suffering from an uncertainty and loss of morale. Few executives, for example, would guarantee to us that they would be in the Brompton Road to celebrate its 140th anniversary.

Mohammed Al Fayed was repeatedly approached by us to answer questions on the problems perceived by his staff, but he steadfastly refused to be interviewed. It is safe to assume that he believes his plans for the refurbishment are on course and that Harrods offers a high standard of service. History may decide otherwise and that, after all the fuss about the acquisition of the store, the Al Fayeds did not contribute a great deal to one of London's best-known institutions. ●



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THE HYPING OF ECSTASY

The illegal drug Ecstasy has become as much part of the Acid House craze in London as Lucozade. Max Prangnell discovers how Ecstasy was insinuated into the city's night life during a long, damp summer.



A home-made tablet the size of a peppercorn; latest in a long line of chemical fashions.

If a group of the most creative minds in the concept department of an advertising agency had devised a marketing campaign for methylenedioxy methamphetamine they could not have performed better than the gushing publicity already given by newspapers and the music business. Alluringly named Ecstasy, the Class-A drug has swept London night-life so that some 15,000-20,000 young people are believed to have tried it over the last few months.

What has made the "launch" of Ecstasy successful is that it has arrived on the back of a night club cult called "Acid House", which has its own music, dress code and language. Record



PHOTOGRAPH BY OLIVER MAXWELL

and fashion industries have been rushing to catch up with the fad, and even commercial radio disc jockeys have drawn on the ecstatic commentary devised by their counterparts in night clubs. What many appear to ignore is that the drug may not be so much part of the cult, as the point of it.

Ecstasy comes in a small, crudely-made tablet about the size of a peppercorn. It was developed by the Germans during the First World War and used as an appetite suppressant. During the early part of the Cold War the American military considered its use along with other drugs, quite what for has never been clear. Later, it was taken up by experimental psychologists who were interested in using the compound to treat disturbed people.

The misuse of Ecstasy started in San Francisco and New York where it was used by the homosexual community to enhance sensual experience. It also became popular on university campuses in the States where it was marketed openly as a drug which was good to dance to, before the American Drugs Enforcement Agency made it illegal. In the early 80s it crossed the Atlantic and gained a small following. Not until this year did Ecstasy take a hold in a larger, less sophisticated group of young people.

The drug produces a feeling of extraordinary well-being and a belief in the user that he or she has been granted boundless energy. If users are in one of the Acid House night clubs they begin to dance frenetically as if compelled by a disorder of the central nervous system: a sort of contemporary version of St Vitus's Dance. To the user, absorbed in the motion of his own body and the beat of the music, time seems to be stretched so that minutes seem like hours.

Researchers found 25 years ago that the drug can break down social barriers, especially inhibitions about bodily contact. The atmosphere in the Acid House clubs is often euphoric. Strangers greet each other at the end of records like long-lost friends. They dance everywhere: on the bars, on the tables, in the lavatories, they dance on their own and in huge, pulsating groups. The air is hot and sweat pours from the dancers as they thrust their arms back and forth chanting, "can you feel it?"

There is little new about taking drugs in night



Can you feel it? The police don't arrest them for having a good time.

"They begin to dance frenetically as if compelled by a disorder of the central nervous system"

clubs. Lady Diana Cooper's circle of bright young aristocrats indulged in a little cocaine in such night clubs as Les Ambassadeurs during the 30s. In the 60s the discothèques were frequented by users of purple hearts, uppers, poppers, cannabis and LSD. What is different about the Acid House cult is that it is an unusually comprehensive form of hedonism. The clubs cater for all the senses. The dry ice is

perfumed and the strobe lights are synchronised with music played at a beat which is believed to raise the heart rate.

The Heaven night club, a cavernous place underneath Charing Cross railway arches, is owned by Richard Branson and regarded by Acid House fans as the best venue. On Monday nights it is taken over by one of the entrepreneurs thrown up by the craze, and renamed the Spectrum Club. Up to 3,000 young people dressed in stylised beachwear jostle at the entrance, but only 1,500 get in because of fire regulations.

Ian St Paul, who runs Spectrum, points out that this is the first time for 10 years that night club fashion is not about looking smart and dressing up for a night on the town. "Kids are not being marginalised because they can't afford to participate . . . we want everyone to have a good time, not just the ones sporting designer labels." Certainly Mr St Paul has a good time. He drives a Mercedes, owns a flat in Covent Garden and spends his weekends at a resort in Ibiza which provided one of the strands of influence that have made Acid House. He employs a staff of around 30 on Monday nights and they cost him £50 each. He spends around £1,000 on special effects such as the perfumed dry ice and a further £2,000 on renting the venue. But with 1,500

young people, each paying £5 to get in, the economics are as simple as they are attractive.

Yet the 1,500 who do get into Spectrum are not from the wealthy quarters of the city, but from ordinary areas like Peckham and Hackney. Many come in from outside London: in club parlance they are New Townies. To an extent the conventional night club code of behaviour has been broken down. Acid Houses are fun houses, with a new egalitarianism that levels out differences between the glamorous and the unstylish. Anyone, however short, stumpy, plain or gauche, is admitted as long as they adhere to Acid House style.

In most clubs, Ecstasy dealers are easy to spot. They often wear T-shirts emblazoned with a capital E, and the letters scintillate under the ultra violet lights. As the night grinds on they begin to draw little knots of people. Each tablet costs about £20. (The price is thought to be coming down.) Deals are done under tables and in darkened corners where sweaty hands may



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pass from pocket to mouth unnoticed. It is unusual for an entire tablet to be taken, for the effects of a half tablet (about 5mg) will last for five or six hours, and to many Acid House fans who are in their first job or still at college, £20 is a large sum.

The Ecstasy sold in Britain is believed to come from Holland where liberal policies allow for unhindered manufacture. It is easy to smuggle because it is small. There may also be small indigenous producers in South London. The operation, in terms of the larger world of illegal drug manufacturing and smuggling, is amateurish and small time. Although sales have yet to be gangsterised because the profits are too small, there is some evidence that organised gangs of football hooligans such as West Ham's notorious "Inter City Firm" are taking an interest in the market.

As one night club manager pointed out, "It's easy to make 300 tablets and sell them in one night. What worries me is what a group of football hooligans would be prepared to do to protect their takings—which on 300 tablets would be roughly £6,000."

Such managers are anxious to emphasise that not all clubs are havens for drug taking. After an exposé in one of the tabloid newspapers this summer, Heaven's manager Paul Churchill has spent every Spectrum night weeding out anyone he suspects of having drugs. For many it does not matter. A lot of Spectrum devotees said they had tried Ecstasy in the early summer but were now "just into the music". In any case the vigilance of Mr Churchill is unlikely to have much effect, since there is nothing to stop people taking it before they go into the club.

Acid House is a peculiar fad drawing on very many disparate strands of popular culture. The dress code makes a passing reference to 60s psychedelia but emphasises fluorescent beach-wear, bright green baseball boots, long, garish shorts, and the printed T-shirts popular in Mediterranean resorts this summer. A consistent motif is the large Smile buttons that littered the depressed 70s. It is escapist clothing that allows the wearers to pretend they are living through the loving, free-wheeling hippy era—and that they have just come off the beach and not a damp metropolitan street.

The music is also eclectic. On the one hand there is an element of House, a style which was developed in the gay discos of Chicago in the early 80s. House has a pounding bass line which is pumped out at 125 beats a minute. The second influence is the more conventional sound heard on radio stations from Berlin to Barcelona, commonly known as "Euro-pop", and now renamed the Balearic Beat.

House and Balearic Beat have been fused with computerised synthesisers that capture snippets of sound and play them back in any rhythm. As with scratch and other semi-home-made sounds, disc jockeys invent their own records and sometimes turn themselves into recording stars in their own right. Music journalist Marek Kohn, writing in the *Independent* newspaper, describes the sound. "What sounds monotonous and trivial on a domestic hi-fi acquires proper dimensions in a club, like a genie let out of its bottle. The grandiose frequency range which expands can be properly



Acid House style: Eye-aching psychedelic beachwear and a great big Smile.

appreciated, as can the distortions running through the flanged bass lines . . . with strobe lights and dry ice added, this is about as close as technology gets to being hallucinogenic."

There are other, rather quirky aspects of the Acid House craze. Alcohol is almost taboo among the young revellers and, curiously, Lucozade has become *de rigueur*. This is because Ecstasy passes more easily into the bloodstream with a soft drink and the energetic dancers require liquid more than intoxication. Lucozade now denotes hipness.

The considerable buzz that has surrounded Acid House this summer has naturally interested the fashion industry and the established end of the music business. A spokesman for Miss Selfridge, the fashion store with 88 branches in Britain, said, "We are watching this one so closely you wouldn't believe it. Although we have no plans yet, the minute this cult spreads to the provinces we'll be there."

Paul Borg, a 20-year-old record producer, believes that the time when the music charts are

"Tottenham Court Road was blocked at 4am every Friday for four weeks in succession"

full of Acid House music is only a few months away. Borg is anticipating this development by creating, with a DJ, Steve Proctor, what they claim to be the definitive Acid House mix. Motivated more by nervous recording executives than social conscience, the pair have edited out any reference to Ecstasy in their records. "It's not about that anymore," he says. "It's about having a good time." There is just a chance that someone, somewhere might believe him.

It is possible for fans to spend not just every night of the week, but every hour of the night, dancing somewhere. As revellers pour out from

the Miami Is My Friend discothèque in New Burlington Street at 3am, they are leafleted by kaftan-clad publicity men and encouraged to head for Mendoza's in SW2. That will open as Miami closes and play music until well after dawn. This pattern is repeated all over the capital nightly.

Often, if no club is attractive enough to pull fans across the capital, they hold impromptu parties in the street. Car stereo systems are turned up loud and headlights are flashed in rhythm, in a frenetic attempt to maintain the buzz. This summer Tottenham Court Road was blocked at 4am every Friday for four weeks in succession as club-goers to the Trip were turned out. The police and stranded drivers stood by, but did not seem to know what to do. "What can we charge them with?" asked one bemused officer, "having a good time?"

There are victims. John Purcell, a travel agent in Victoria says he spent three months, "doing just about everything in search of the ultimate thrill". He claimed he had only to hear a record over the telephone and he would start dancing. More seriously, he was burnt out. A characteristic of all amphetamines is that they borrow energy needed for essential functions, so that sooner or later the user becomes extraordinarily fatigued.

The drug is known to cause loss of concentration, sleeplessness and, ultimately, disorientation and distress. It may have more serious effects which have yet to be determined by research. There is also no guarantee that the tablets coming on the market every night are not contaminated with dangerous chemicals or more addictive drugs.

In the excitement and the haste to make money, the night club world and the new peripatetic disc jockeys have ignored the fact that the entire fad is based around a Class-A drug, which is at least notionally ranked alongside heroin and cocaine. Even if Ecstasy is not as dangerous as these two better-known drugs, its illegality could lead the ecstatic dancers into contact with them, and perhaps to try them. The dancers themselves regard this as a naïve and middle-aged fear. The authorities for the most part seem unconcerned. The Home Office, police and drugs-help organisations agree that this is a temporary fashion and that "in the grand scheme of Britain's drug problem Ecstasy is not that big a deal".

It may be because of the restless mobility of the Acid House craze or simply complacency, but there have been just six arrests for possession of Ecstasy and only one for trafficking. There appears to be no real effort to trace the supply routes from Holland and absolutely no attempt to stop its use. Jeff Woods, of the Government's National Drugs Intelligence Unit, says this is more a question of priorities than a lack of will. His resources are already stretched, fighting heroin and cocaine.

Even if the National Drugs Intelligence Unit did mount a campaign against Ecstasy, another new cult may simply take its place. This one is called Phantasia and draws its inspiration from the Walt Disney film. It offers a drug called Fantasy (a mixture of Ecstasy and Mescaline), a club called Phantasia, and, like Acid House, a retinue of clothing manufacturers, disc jockeys and music biz people waiting to dance to its tune ●



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Which pleases Jean Quero. He still has a few empty pages in his red book.



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A PARK HYATT HOTEL ON CADOGAN PLACE

DOGMA VERSUS ARROGANCE

Over the last six months Mrs Thatcher and the Chancellor have waged an acrimonious and mostly private war against each other.

ANDREW RAWNSLEY provides the definitive account of the intrigue

It is said that when God is suffering from delusions of grandeur he thinks he is Nigel Lawson.

Or put it, as a fellow minister does, another way: "Ah, the Chancellor. No one has a higher opinion of Nigel than me, except of course himself. He is an arrogant man, with a lot to be arrogant about."

Or put it, as an opponent does, like this: "There is only one important thing you need to know about anybody, which explains everything else about them. And the most important thing to know about Nigel is that he called his daughter Nigel."

Everybody in Westminster, Whitehall and the Treasury has a joke about the Chancellor of the Exchequer's vanity.

The Government's second most magnificent ego has always taken the jokes in his stride, even rather relished them as confirmation that the rest of the world shared his own estimation of his importance. They have been great bites on one of the hardest hides in Government.

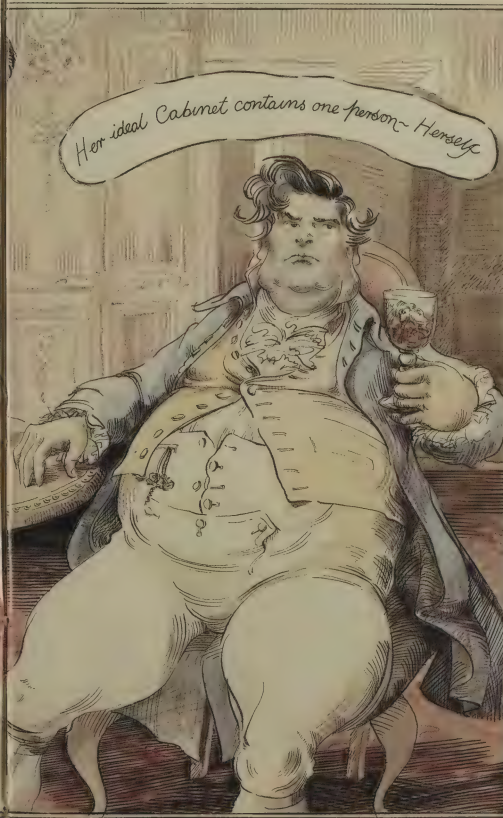
What Nigel Lawson is finding rather less comfortable is the current tide of laughter about his stewardship of the economy. Have you heard the one about the trade deficit? It was so large that the City first assumed it must be a mistake on the news tapes. Nobody has made jokes about the Chancellor's competence before. Most painfully of all, the most belly-splitting, wet-eyed roars of merriment are coming from his next door neighbour in Number 10 Downing Street: the laughter of the Prime Minister at the spectacle of an overweening Minister humbled.

Less than two months ago, though now it seems more like two millennia, this was Nigel Lawson's year. It promised to be an *annus mirabilis* of a brilliant Budget presented by a Chancellor at the height of his powers to huge acclaim.

As MPs left for their summer holidays, Lawson had just overtaken Denis Healey for length of service in Number 11 to become the



*The Lady views the Body Politic with distress
She suspects he is desirous of becoming Master himself*



*It is too corpulent and prodigal for her thrifty tastes
- or at least of finding another Mistress.*

longest-serving Chancellor since the Second World War. By next spring, when he should be presenting his sixth Budget, Lawson will be the longest-serving Chancellor since the First World War.

But if you were a gambling man, which Lawson is, it would be rash to stake anything on it more valuable than your gardening shirt. One Treasury official, a Lawson fan, fears that his chances of having the same boss by the next Budget are "60/40 at best". The 40 per cent possibility is his departure from Number 11 in a spectacular blaze of anger with his neighbour.

The principal cause of that fear landed at Heathrow and stepped off a plane from Washington late in July. News of Professor Sir Alan Walters, the Prime Minister's once and future economic advisor, and of his derogatory views of her Chancellor, was soon spread over every newspaper, radio bulletin and television news programme. But Walters's visit to Britain was as discreet as those comments were not. Little wonder. His principal stop while in London was to be at 10 Downing Street.

"The most important thing to know about Nigel is that he called his daughter Nigel."

Details of the Walters visit have been guarded with zealous secrecy ever since. Were they to become public, Downing Street knew it would be difficult to sustain its repeated protestations that Walters was speaking for nobody but himself—and certainly not the Prime Minister—when he so rudely attacked her Chancellor. If the visit, so close to the outburst of vitriol, were to become public, there would be, in the phrase Lawson himself claims to have coined when City Editor at *The Sunday Telegraph*, a "credibility gap". It would put a complexion on Walters's behaviour that suggested it was less the freelance carping of a semi-detached advisor, and more an intrigue against the Chancellor by his own Prime Minister.

The full extent of Sir Alan's activities seems to have been as much of a mystery to Lawson as it was to nearly everybody else. As he left for his summer holidays, the Chancellor was in a self-congratulatory mood. Before the Commons broke up for the recess, nearly 200 Tory

WOULDN'T YOU PREFER AN UNINTENTIONAL



Flying London to Singapore there are two ways of being woken up. All but one airline use the 'landing for more fuel, halfway there in the middle of the night' technique. Only

MPs—more than half the parliamentary party—crammed into an upstairs committee room to give him a rapturous reception. “The best Chancellor this century”, trilled Sir William Clark, chairman of the Tory backbench finance committee and a man who will never use one piece of hyperbole when two will do. “Unsackable”, said Tony Beaumont-Dark, the backbench MP for Selly Oak and self-styled voice of Brum.

The Nigel Lawson Fan Club, an organisation once commanding rather fewer members than the Survivors of Jack the Ripper, could not cope with membership applications. Against the background of months of bitter warring between Numbers 10 and 11, the meeting turned into a Save Nigel rally. The traditional desk-banging was led by some Tory MPs who once regarded his appointment as conclusive proof that the Prime Minister no longer had the right number of deutschmarks to the pound.

Some of it was natural enthusiasm for the man they credit as the architect of the Tories’ third election victory. Some of it was personal thanks for making every one of them considerably better off in his last Budget. Tim Sainsbury, the junior defence minister and grocery multi-millionaire, boasted, only half in jest, that there were not enough digits on his pocket calculator to add up his profits.

Scarcely had the applause of his backbenchers died in his ears, than the Chancellor’s post-Budget honeymoon went into sharp eclipse. His face has got progressively redder with the trade deficit. Portrayed in one of the more naive Budget headlines as Arnold Schwarzenegger—“Lawson The Tax Destroyer”—he now looks more like the hapless Mr Pooter, wandering from crisis to crisis, staggering helplessly as the economic ceiling falls in.

Both are exaggerations. The Budget was never as good—the outlook now is not so bad—as was said then and is said now, sometimes by the same people. But trade in the political stock of Lawsons—once such a roaring bull market—is now dominated by bears.

Yet the main source of the Chancellor’s misery is not interest rates, nor the deficit. It is that inexhaustible seam of trouble for all Cabinet ministers: the Prime Minister.

The Fan Club has lost its most important member. Mrs Thatcher, in her end-of-term address to the 1922 Committee, attempted to hose down the speculation that she had terminally fallen out with her Chancellor. Nigel Lawson was, she said, a “wonderful” Chancellor. The Budget has been “brilliant in concept, brilliant in drafting and brilliant in delivery”. But the lady protested too much. In that same week Number 10 had been conniving in what now seems to be a deliberate attempt to destabilise her Chancellor.

Sir Alan’s secret visit, and the indiscreet outpourings which followed once he was safely 3,000 miles away from Downing Street, were only the latest chapter in an unfinished feud between Prime Minister and Chancellor both as vicious and as potentially dangerous for the Government as the Westland affair. Despite the façade of end-of-term unity, the Chancellor and

the Prime Minister remain at best deeply suspicious of each other. At worst they actively loathe each other.

Just before Mr Lawson left for his holiday and Mrs Thatcher set off for Australia, the Chancellor slipped through the connecting door between Numbers 10 and 11 Downing Street for a drink in her study. It was apparently one of the more cordial meetings between the two most powerful members of the Government in the last six months. “He didn’t threaten to resign, this time,” according to one Treasury minister. Nor did he repeat the remark, which he had been muttering like a mantra for a fortnight, that “her ideal Cabinet contains one person—herself”. She did not mention Sir Alan Walters, whose outbursts had caused Lawson



Professor Walters shoots from the mouth.

“He now looks more like the hapless Mr Pooter, wandering from crisis to crisis, staggering helplessly as the economic ceiling falls in”

so much grief. It was “an armed truce”, according to one of his Treasury colleagues.

Thatcher and Lawson have always had a heavily-guarded respect for each other. “The sort of respect you get between an elephant and a rhino”, says one Cabinet colleague, without specifying which is which.

She has never been infatuated with him in the way she was with John Moore or Lord Young, or still is with Cecil Parkinson and—her current blue-eyed boy—John Major, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury. It was his mind she was after. On her side, the respect was reinforced by a huge debt for his strategy as Energy Secretary in her first term of building up the massive coal reserves with which to see off the miners’ strike. She made him Chancellor after just two years in the Cabinet. She came to regard him as the best Chancellor since the War, an accolade previously awarded to Roy Jenkins, the last resident of Number 11 to fulfil the

superhousewife’s dream of a balanced budget.

That respect was reciprocated. He owed his promotion—to the Treasury as Financial Secretary immediately after the 1979 election, and to the Chancellorship in 1983—entirely to her. If Thatcherism can be compared with Christianity, as the Prime Minister likes to do, then Lawson is a true believer. But the years have made it a broader church and him less a devout apostle and more his own man.

The Prime Minister is the head of the Roman Catholic branch of Thatcherism: the original faith. She takes its texts, the gospels according to Sir Keith Joseph, Adam Smith and Hayek, fairly literally, and has a particularly zealous belief in the infallibility of its ruling head.

Lawson, despite silly-season gossip that he is toying with conversion to Rome, has tended to an Anglican approach towards Thatcherism, one of pragmatic compromise. The prime example of this came when he ditched his original monetarist flight plan—the Medium Term Financial Strategy—and started playing with heresies, particularly a managed exchange rate. This is what ultimately put him on a collision course with Mrs Thatcher and her personal confessors, the head of the Number 10 policy unit, Professor Brian Griffiths and his monetarist soul-mate Sir Alan Walters.

Lawson has come to place increasing reliance on a stable exchange rate as the centrepiece for his counter-inflation policy. For about 18 months up to the last Budget he had been conducting what amounted to a secret exchange-rate policy, shadowing the pound with the deutschmark, with the ultimate aim of putting sterling into the European Monetary System. The secrecy was designed, not so much for the benefit of the Press and the currency markets, as for “her next door” and her advisors.

Managing the exchange rate, pegging the pound roughly around DM 3 and helping British exporters, ran directly against both Thatcher’s purist belief in free markets and what Treasury officials call her “phallic-complex” about a strong sterling. As for the EMS, her instinctive, eye-poking anti-Europeanism has always made the EMS an outer circle of hell in the Prime Minister’s personal gallery of demons.

Those prejudices were bolstered, with Jesuitic zeal, by her personal confessors. They sniffed the heresy coming out of Number 11. Long before Sir Alan Walters came out of his Washington closet and into the open with his remarkable attacks on Lawson, he had been advising Thatcher part time. He first joined her as her economic advisor in 1981, at the lowest ebb of her fortunes. Walters’s background was her background: the outsider who had made it in. He was born in a Leicester slum in 1926. His father was a manager in a grocery store. Walters shares the Prime Minister’s own estimation of herself: “She is the only real Tory leader since Churchill.” Not surprisingly, grocer’s daughter and grocer’s son got on.

Sir Alfred Sherman, who recruited Walters for the Number 10 policy unit, credits—if that is the right word—Sir Alan with effectively running the economy for much of Mrs Thatcher’s first term. It was Walters who went to her, before the 1981 Budget, the most deflationary in peacetime history, and said she should raise taxes by £5 billion in the middle of



Neighbours! Mrs Thatcher and Mr Lawson need a little understanding . . .

the worse recession since the War. He was also responsible for the high exchange-rate policy—the \$2.40-pound—in Mrs Thatcher's first term, which caused so much devastation to manufacturing industry. Another of his "achievements" on behalf of the policy unit is said to have been to scotch railway electrification. One view is that he gained a knighthood for services to receivers and accountants specialising in bankruptcy. The Prime Minister's own view is that Sir Alan is the best, unsliced, 100 per cent wholemeal, additive-free monetarist economist apart from Milton Friedman. That is very much a minority view within her Government, and more so within the Treasury. Still, she has always made a formidable minority of one.

Though Walters officially retired as her economic advisor in 1983 he has stayed in regular touch. She had not wanted him to go, and insisted at his farewell party after the 1983 election that he should return soon. Nor had he wanted to go, he was palpably enjoying the power and prestige of being the Prime Minister's personal economic guru. It was pressure from his wife, Patti, who prefers Washington to London, that sent him back to Washington to work for the World Bank and for John Hopkins University.

But Walters has kept in touch. Market-sensitive advice could not be relayed by telephone, but World Bank business brought him to Britain often enough to drop in on the Prime Minister and his fellow believer, Professor Griffiths. They appear to have rumbled Lawson's exchange-rate policy around the beginning of the year, and they began bending the Prime Minister's ear to put a halt to it.

Days before the Budget, Thatcher called Lawson into Number 10 along with Robin Leigh-Pemberton, the Governor of the Bank of England. Leigh-Pemberton has suffered enough of the Chancellor's legendary bullying of his directors to have enjoyed the spectacle that followed. His predecessor, Gordon Richardson, once described working with Lawson as "the end of civilisation as we know it". Moreover, the Bank was nervous of the increasing expense of repeated interventions in the currency markets to keep the pound down.

Using a brief prepared by Griffiths and Walters, Thatcher tore into Lawson's strategy of managing sterling by a mixture of interest rate cuts and intervention by the Bank. It was sucking in overseas funds, threatening a surge in inflation. He should change course and set the pound free.

Lawson, unlike Sir Geoffrey Howe, has never been prepared to take Prime Ministerial handbaggings. He is, according to colleagues, the only man who can be relied on to stand up to Thatcher in Cabinet, at least when he is sure of his ground. Anyway, he enjoys a scrap. He has an undistinguished reputation for picking on junior officials just for the intellectual pleasure of taking them apart, and according to Christopher Fildes he will "cross the road to pick a fight". He does not suffer fools at all, never mind gladly, even if they are Prime Minister. Lawson told her that inflation was under control—a line she is said to have taken, with some relish, to repeating back to him over the last month.

“His tendency to bite
the head off a slow
knight of the shires,
rather than think of the
vote and bite his tongue,
has not won friends”

The Prime Minister was at her most imperious, the Chancellor at his sulkiest, during the confrontation. She is said to have pointed to the brass plate on the front of Number 10, "Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury", and reminded him that she did not regard First Lord as a courtesy title. He wondered whether she would like to present the Budget.

No, she said, but it later emerged she wanted to re-write some of it. The Chancellor was asked to re-draft the passage on exchange-rate policy.

On Monday morning, March 7, the Bank of England stopped intervening to bring down the pound and within minutes sterling started to soar. The Prime Minister had won on points.

At Question Time that week she went for the knock-out, announcing an entirely different exchange rate policy—that of Griffiths and Walters—to the one her Chancellor had been propounding not only for months, but less than 10 minutes earlier from the same despatch box.

"There is no way," she said famously, "you can buck the market." There was no way, Lawson was learning, you can buck the Margaret, either. He was described as "pole-axed" and "incandescent". It was a humiliation mercilessly exploited by John Smith, his Labour opposite number. With days to go before his most important Budget, a Budget he had spent 25 years planning, thinking and writing about, first at *The Spectator* and *The Sunday Telegraph* then at the Treasury, she had demolished one of his central economic policies. It was a humiliation he has neither forgotten nor forgiven.

Lawson had to wait two months for his revenge. On Friday, May 13, the pound went to a two-year high on the currency markets after Thatcher had again, with Lawson sitting alongside on the front bench, rejected management of sterling, apparently breaking assurances that she would not repeat her earlier performance.

The Cabinet began to divide. Sir Geoffrey Howe led a majority for Lawson. Lord Young, still rowing his way back into favour after his own falling-out with the Prime Minister over his refusal to take the party chairmanship on her terms, led for Thatcher. The Tory Whips reported that most backbenchers were rallying to Lawson and Howe, and there was a unanimous opinion that the row should be buried.

This time the Chancellor demanded a meeting with the Prime Minister, storming across to Number 10 with a prepared statement. It was not so much a peace accord as a demand for unconditional surrender, in which she would be forced to say, albeit through gritted teeth, that the Government would "use the available levers, both interest rates and intervention" to control the exchange rate. At Question Time the next day Thatcher was forced into a humiliating retreat, reading out the statement prepared by Lawson and presented to her that previous night as an alternative to his resignation. The next day's headlines—"Lawson Victory" and "Thatcher Climb Down"—were a sweet, but short-lived, revenge for the Chancellor. "She'll get her own back," predicted one of the Cabinet. She is doing so.

Lawson was now posing, and as long as he continues in office will continue to pose, a direct threat to her personal authority. He had made her look silly, not a condition any politician, let alone the Prime Minister, finds comfortable. Like Howe, Lawson seemed to be flying the Jolly Roger from Number 11. That mutiny was more apparent than real, and as much as it was mutiny it was of her own making. But, in the words of one minister, it had "got personal". Something far more volatile than managing exchange rates was now at stake: managing the two most powerful egos in the Cabinet.

There is little doubt that Mrs Thatcher would be happy now, if not eager, for Lawson to go.

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The Energy Secretary Cecil Parkinson, having been given the chairmanship of the Star Chamber, is already lined up as an heir-presumptive to Number 11. He is both more pliant (about as pliant as plasticine) and an opponent of the EMS. Mrs Parkinson has, say some Westminster wags, already rung Mrs Lawson for the curtain measurements at Number 11. The others are polishing up their jokes about unmarried mothers' tax allowances in preparation for Parkinson's first budget. But Lawson has too great a potential for going explosively, to be forced out. He can fall, but he must not be seen to be pushed.

In late July he felt the first sharp stab in the back from the tongue of Sir Alan Walters. Sir Alan's views began to appear everywhere. The European Monetary System was "half-baked". Shadowing the deutschmark was "misguided". Heaping insult on to injury, Sir Alan allowed himself to be quoted saying that Lawson was "tired" and might be "thinking of moving on". If Lawson's first reaction was to shrug it off, all that changed when it was deliberately made known, from Number 10, that negotiations were under way for Sir Alan to return as the Prime Minister's personal economic father-confessor. What must have additionally irked Lawson is the likely salary for Sir Alan's return to Number 10—£100,000, about double the Chancellor's own.

When, subsequently, everything began to overboil, Downing Street laboured quite successfully to put about the impression that Sir Alan was a naive academic, speaking out of turn and on behalf of no one but himself. Neither seemed likely. Three years in Downing Street—and more with the World Bank, a highly political institution—suggest that Walters knew exactly what he was doing. His secret visit to Downing Street, a few days before his intervention, suggests that Number 10 did too.

At the Treasury there is a suspicion, which over the summer has hardened into belief, that Downing Street deliberately set up Walters. The Prime Minister had been infuriated by ferocious attacks on her for second-guessing Lawson launched by the Chancellor's old friend and confidant, Sam Brittan, from his pulpit in the *Financial Times*. Walters was her counter-strike. Like two superpowers, they were now fighting the war by proxy. More importantly, Walters's attacks on Lawson, relayed to any television, newspaper or radio reporter who would listen, had all the familiar ingredients of one of Mrs Thatcher's softening-up campaigns of a minister who has become too powerful, too much of a nuisance, or both. It was accompanied by the encouragement of speculation that Parkinson would soon be succeeding Lawson, perhaps as early as October.

Her press secretary Bernard Ingham could have picked up a telephone and told Walters to shut up. He did that, or rather told his deputy, Terry Perks to do it, only after Cranley Onslow, the chairman of the 1922 committee, made it clear to the Prime Minister that the backbenches wanted neither Howe nor Lawson moved, and Thatcher should act to scotch the fevered speculation that both were heading for the long drop. The pound was jumping around



Mrs L telling Nigel to buy a new briefcase

the exchange markets like a startled rabbit. Things had got out of hand.

The result was Mrs Thatcher's snap reshuffle just before the parliamentary recess—so sudden that there was not the traditional weekend meeting of Government business managers beforehand, and some ministers did not know of their fate until less than two hours before it

“The Chancellor is a gambler. He caught it from his grandfather, whose idea of a perfect holiday was a fortnight in a casino”

was announced. Stymied, perhaps, in the hope of easing the Chancellor out immediately, the Prime Minister could still make one small but significant change in order to collect inside knowledge about her next-door neighbour. She recruited for her new Parliamentary Private Secretary, Number 10's eyes and ears on the backbenches, Mark Lennox-Boyd, the Conservative MP for Morecambe and Lunesdale, and previously Lawson's own PPS.

Some of his friends, notably Brittan, believe Lawson should have issued a back-me-or-sack-me ultimatum to the Prime Minister instead of settling for that fragile and false façade of end-of-term unity.

As it is, nothing has been resolved. The issue between the Government's most powerful neighbours, how to contain inflationary pressure without triggering a damaging rise in sterling, remains. The Chancellor believes in a managed exchange rate; the Prime Minister and her shadow Chancellor over the water believe “you cannot buck the market”.

Nobody knows what Lawson will do next, himself almost certainly included. He is the tightest member of the Cabinet, with few confidants in politics and fewer still among his

former profession. There are only two other jobs in government he could do—hers, which is not available, and the Foreign Office, which he is not sure he wants. “I have no ambition to be Prime Minister,” he often says. He has said it so often it is becoming difficult to believe. But at 56 he is probably too old, given Mrs Thatcher's hankering for a freehold on eternity, and too wise, to think it a possibility.

The Chancellor has always been respected, rather than loved, on his backbenches. His tendency to bite the head off a slow knight of the shires, rather than think of the vote and bite his tongue, has not won friends.

There are no such things as Lawsonites. He has always been a loner, quite unclubbable, aloof to the media, he has never cultivated backbench support, and there is nobody in the Cabinet whom he would call a close friend. In a leadership contest he would probably be lucky to get 50 votes. He is Jewish and an intellectual. The more prejudiced members of the Stupid Party could not vote for one of those—an intellectual, that is.

It is said on his behalf that he would like the Foreign Office. It might appeal, if only as a form of revenge because they turned him down for a job after he left Oxford. But he has shown little interest in abroad, and even less enthusiasm for being polite to the people who live there, which is part of the job. It would also leave him even more suffocatingly under the Prime Minister's skirts. There has been talk of a return to journalism. In particular the editorship of *The Times* is mooted, and he could certainly reinvest it with weight.

The likeliest prospect is the one most talked about: going quietly to get rich quickly in the City. That is thought to be his wife Therese's preference. Mrs Lawson was badly upset by the press roasting she got for a drink driving offence before Christmas, and yearns for a quieter life. Not rich, at least by many of his colleague's standards, he would undoubtedly be keen to recover the wealth he lost in the 1974 stock market crash, when the substantial money he inherited from an aunt, and that of his first wife, were wiped out. John Nott was worth over half a million pounds a year to Lazards. Lawson, one of the most successful post-war Chancellors, must be worth at least double that.

There are two things about Lawson which Mrs Thatcher underestimates at some peril if she thinks he can be eased out quietly, as do those who believe his current embarrassments will drive the Chancellor into premature retirement. He is not a quitter. The Walters affair and his present predicament will, according to some around him, make him tough it out. “Nigel has, of course, an eye on the history books,” says one. “If he quits it'll be when he's ahead, not behind.”

And the Chancellor is a gambler. He caught it from his grandfather, whose idea of a perfect holiday was apparently a fortnight in a casino. Lawson's Oxford contemporaries remember late-night card sessions with the young Nigel. He played a mean hand of poker.

Lawson is not the type to fold a strong hand when the next clash with his next-door neighbour erupts over who runs the economy and how. He might take Sam Brittan's advice. He might just be tempted to up the stakes and call her bluff ●



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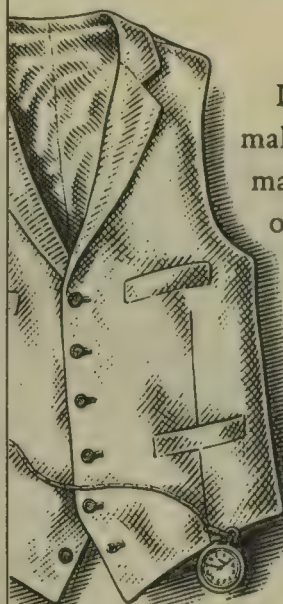
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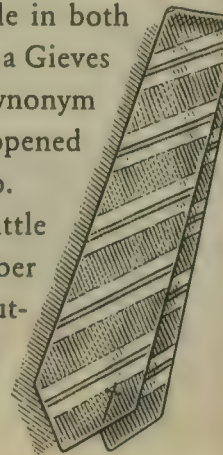
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THE TUBE

A tale of neglect
and stupendous incompetence

by Matthew Engel



The man's name was Harry Beck, and his legacy is far more important to London than many of the things achieved by the thousands of people who are remembered. Beck devised the diagrammatic map of the London Underground, as printed on mugs, T-shirts, key fobs and every other kind of souvenir, the map that remains printed on the mind's eye of almost everyone who has ever visited the city.

I was a Beck boy. In the 1960s when I was young I would come up to London and stay with my grandmother. Between helpings of chicken soup I wandered off and explored by tube. She was never bothered: the Underground was safe, cheap, quick and efficient, everyone knew that. From her flat (Golders Green, Northern Line) I discovered Test matches (Oval, Northern Line; Lord's, St John's Wood, Bakerloo, now Jubilee); the First Division (Upton Park and Fulham Broadway, District Line); art (Trafalgar Square, as was, on the Bakerloo) and, in a manner of speaking, sex (Leicester Square, Piccadilly or Northern Lines).

Beck's achievement was to create a map that ignored scale and accuracy in the interests of clarity. I never cottoned on to that and my vision of the city was entirely based on his. South London comprised Morden, Wimbledon and a lot of white space. On the other hand, Ongar seemed no farther than London Bridge, though I never did quite get there.

Even now, when I go to a strange city, I seek refuge below ground and in the maps provided by Beck's worldwide imitators. Sometimes I wonder if I am the only person alive who knows

the only station name which London shares with Paris (Temple); or that Richmond is a terminus in London, Sydney and San Francisco—and a major junction in Melbourne. And for years if someone at Euston Square asked me the way to Warren Street I was inclined to tell him to take the Metropolitan or Circle eastbound and change on to the Northern or Victoria Lines southbound rather than directing him to take the Circle.

It is different now. These days one cannot with confidence recommend anyone to descend into the London Underground unless it is essential. Superficially, it is still the system devised by competitive Victorian and Edwardian railway barons, pulled together by the brilliant manager Frank Pick and mapped by Beck and, one would have thought, improved by new additions, modern technology and the worldwide rediscovery of the importance of urban railways.

In theory, this could be a golden age for the London Underground, the arterial flow of a thriving city. In practice, the Underground system is in crisis. The horror of the King's Cross fire last November 18, when 31 people died, brought the problems into the spotlight. And day after day, in far more trivial ways, everyone who relies on the Tube knows that something has gone wrong.

In one respect, the Underground is easier to drift about than ever before. The new Travelcards and Capitalcards offer passengers the freedom of the city for a couple of quid. So I wandered and tried to recapture my youth. What I found were problems.

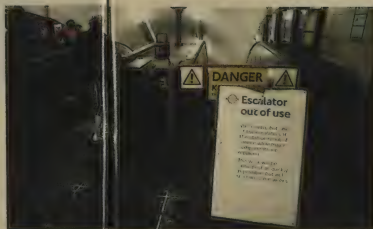
For a start, the trains are grossly overcrowded. 2.6 million people now use the Underground every working day, up 60 per cent on 1982, with no significant new capacity. Now the management are prone to talk about "the problems of success" which is both tactless and misleading.

The system is so overloaded that one tiny incident is liable to throw out a whole line. This is particularly true on the Northern Line, of which more anon, but it happens throughout the system. At Shepherd's Bush I waited half an hour to head back to town while five Metropolitan trains went by the other way. I was forced to conclude that a hole had opened up somewhere around Goldhawk Road.

Safety is a major concern. Until the Moor-gate crash of 1975 the Underground had an



Underfunding and mismanagement produce a range of problems: in central London lifts and escalators are frequently out of order, trains are overcrowded and dirty, and passengers disgruntled; but at the outer reaches of the lines wild flowers and scorpions take the place of sandwich wrappers and soft drink cans



excellent safety record. King's Cross, however, revealed a frightening level of complacency and incompetence. The Fennell Report, which is expected to sandbag the management, is due out sometime in the autumn. There is now an understandable paranoia about fire. The fire brigade get called for everything: "sometimes", said one manager, "if a passenger smells the early turn inspector cooking his breakfast." This causes delay. On one platform at Piccadilly Circus I counted 23 No Smoking notices, in addition to the 72 on each train. Yet smoking

was allowed on the Underground without serious mishap for 119 years.

One of the kinder theories about King's Cross is that the Underground, like most rail systems, has traditionally been run by railmen. All their thinking was geared towards the safety of the trains, which over the years has been superb. They never worried about stations. After the Oxford Circus fire seven years ago, when a tragedy was narrowly avoided, an independent pressure group issued a report predicting disaster. "Our fire prevention

procedures are among the most stringent anywhere," replied the then director of operations. "There is more danger crossing the road."

Since King's Cross, and even before hearing from Fennell, the management has introduced 104 new safety measures. Many of these naturally relate to lifts and escalators. At the last count, 58 escalators out of the total of 276 throughout the system were not working, and 18 lifts out of 71. There were various reasons—defects, planned maintenance, unplanned post-disaster maintenance, years of under-investment.

Managers point to the facilities that have been given to many of the stations in the centre of town. Some stations do look a little less seedy, though the new look is not to everyone's taste. The charming simplicity of Underground

design is being replaced by oddities such as the new motifs at Tottenham Court Road. But what is much more serious, the facilities may just be distracting attention from the dirt.

The cleaning system has now been privatised and modernised to no great effect. Gone are the fluffers, the gangs of women who used to roam the tunnels in the small hours, scrubbing. They have been replaced by a special cleaning train. Some railworkers say this is not only far less efficient but could be dangerous, as dirt builds up round the electrical parts. This is denied by the management, though they admit the train is less good at cleaning nooks and crannies.

Good or bad, the train can do nothing about the ubiquitous graffiti. The scrawls fall into two categories: traditional small-scale work (in one lift at Tufnell Park I counted enough to cover most of the obsessions of the age), and the new frenzied scrawling imported from New York. When I sampled that strange outpost of the Underground, the East London Line which serves Wapping, the trains were every bit as covered as anything in the more frightening districts of Brooklyn. Perhaps this is how *Sun* journalists exercise their creativity.

Talking about New York raises the subject of crime. No harm befall me on my journeys,



though I grew mildly uneasy at dusk on a near-deserted platform at Willesden Junction. Underground crime takes on the characteristics of the world overhead. Round Balham and Brixton you might get mugged; at Oxford Circus you would get your pocket picked; at Bank they could probably embezzle you. Again this hazard is not the management's fault directly, but there have been serious cutbacks in staffing. Staff numbers have been reduced by eight per cent in the last year alone. Vandalism and attacks cannot be reduced when there is so rarely anyone around to discourage them.

Despite all this, the 2.6 million journeys made every day usually end with no more damage than frazzled nerves and apologies for lateness. And if you choose your route carefully, it is still possible to have a pleasant ride. The Buddha

looks pretty in the sunshine outside Kensington Olympia; there are shrub roses at Snaresbrook; there are jolly multi-coloured new trains on the Jubilee Line. As the masses went to work I started to enjoy myself.

So it was that I finally made it to Ongar to discover that just a dozen stations from the madness of Liverpool Street, London Regional Transport is running one of the last gentle rides in Southern England.

The shuttle to and from Epping is not one of the great train services of the world; if you miss the 9.19 in the morning there is a seven-hour wait for the next. But it is an enchanting little ride, almost brushing its way through the woods on the single track, past ferny glades and fields hopping with rabbits. One would almost have felt like Betjeman if one hadn't felt quite so lonely.

Ongar station is supposed to have its own curious, harmless breed of scorpion. They probably came here to retire. The line peters out gently amid ragwort and rosebay, and the noticeboard outside wonders if anyone would like to play carpet bowls. Yet at Mile End, on the return journey, I swear there was not an inch of space on the platform.

But there are dozens of stations like Mile End and hardly any Ongars. And it is likely to be the mid 90s before the Central Line, the only one left with decentralised signalling (some staff say it is the most efficient for that reason), is modernised to allow extra trains. It is possible that only after that, something serious could be done about the Northern Line, which most passengers would regard as a more urgent case for treatment.

At least, most passengers who live on the Northern Line would regard it as more urgent. For a time last year regular users had to be segregated at dinner parties as they had no other topic of conversation. At one point, passengers at Golders Green and Finchley Central mutinied and hijacked the trains. Since then the service has been unreliable rather than abysmal, but the acting divisional manager Eddie Clark still wears a harried look.

It is always harder to get angry about something like a railway after you meet the people who run it. Mr Clark's men oversee both the Northern Line and the more efficient Victoria Line from an anonymous office block in a side-street near Euston. There is a circular control room with hardly any daylight. On the Northern Line side five senior signalmen (each in charge of a section of track), two controllers and an announcer stare at the map while red lights representing trains snake along it.

The atmosphere is much like an air-traffic centre or a City dealing room: control panels, phones, VDUs, TV screens, black coffee, cigarettes, and, on a bad day, severe anxiety symptoms. To Mr Clark's great relief it was quite a good day when I went. There was a 15-minute delay at Bank when a door jammed, another awkward moment with a lift at the Angel, but nothing really serious.

On the whole it was rather reassuring. The Northern Line is one of the world's most complicated railways. During the rush hours there are 84 trains scattered between 49 stations, and all of them have to pass through the



London Regional Transport say the new ticket barriers have many extra safety features

windpipe at Camden Town. Somebody up there does care, and is watching and trying to do something about whatever has gone wrong. In the short-term—today's rush hour—the men at Euston will do their best. In the long-term—looking towards the 21st century—Government and LRT have various options to improve the service. But in the medium-term, the next 10 years, the prospect for Northern Line travellers is bleak.

There is a second vital report for London Underground this autumn to go alongside the Fennell Report on safety. The Central London Rail Study, commissioned by the Government, is due to draw more lines on the map. There is a competing clamour of ideas to an extent not seen since the mid-Victorian railway mania. And two of them keep recurring. One is that the Northern Line should be split into separate railways to solve the Camden Town problem and allow a more frequent service. The other is for a new Hackney-Chelsea line: not because anyone wishes to travel between Hackney and Chelsea (well, maybe they might) but because it has been talked about for ages and would help to solve all kinds of problems: bringing various ill-served suburbs into the system; relieving the Piccadilly, the District and the Central lines; even helping to clear up the awful congestion at Liverpool Street. But the project would probably surpass the Channel Tunnel in cost and complexity and it is hard to imagine it really happening.

More likely there will be some tinkering: a new light railway here, an extension there, a bit of money saved somewhere else. In the meantime, all that the LRT managers can do is patch holes and hope for the best. Talks are going on with the rail unions on matters such as pay structure. One of the Northern Line's major problems is that drivers get more money on other lines, where the trains are one-man operated. Drivers therefore move on as soon as they can, and the Northern is always short of staff. Some extra cash would help.

The new ticketing system will be completed by March next year, along with the rather frightening barriers. LRT insist that there are so many safety features that it will be *easier* to get out in an emergency than it has been in the past. They also prefer to call barriers "gates".

Ian Arthurton, the Underground's General

Manager (Operations), told me something rather exciting. The management want to foster team spirit among the staff at each station, so employees are going to be shifted around less. At the big stations one person is to have full responsibility, not just when he is on shift but the whole time. "You mean," I said to Mr Arthurton, "a station master?" "Well, yes," he said, "but we're going to call him customer services manager." I can't help feeling that nothing would restore public confidence in the Underground system so much as the sight of an old-fashioned station master, particularly if he had a top hat and watch chain.

But even a proper station master would not wholly repair the damage. The Underground is carrying more people because the new ticket system encourages extra journeys, because employment and tourism in Central London have grown, and because the roads have become intolerable. All these points should surely have been foreseen.

So who does one blame? There are a great many suspects. Control of London Transport has changed hands seven times since 1962, through reorganisation or political changes during its spell under the aegis of the Greater London Council. The early 80s saw Ken Livingstone introducing the cheaper travel policy known as Fare's Fair, but also seem to have been characterised by a good deal of political clumsiness which caused serious distrust between the GLC and transport managers.

Then there are the unions, who have successfully enforced a system where all promotion to supervisory grades is done according to seniority rather than merit. Theoretically the management can keep out incompetents but in practice it rarely happens.

After 1984, when the Government abolished the GLC and London Transport was replaced by London Regional Transport, the new bosses were seized with a frenzied spirit of Thatcherite flab-fighting above all else. Ian Arthurton suggested cautiously that, "we may have concentrated more than we should on cost reduction rather than paying attention to the quality of service that we provided." But the management took their cue from Whitehall.

In the early 80s, city administrations all over the world were planning, building and subsidising new rapid transit systems. In Singapore, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Lille, San Francisco, Washington they worked on the principle that the only way to make modern cities work is to invest in cheap and efficient alternatives to the private car. In London the Underground was being allowed to run down. At the time its use was declining. Overhead, the roads were starting to fill up towards saturation point. Mr Livingstone's GLC and other transport campaigners wanted to invest in trains and buses and encourage people on to them. The Government not only opposed them but stopped them. It was disastrously wrong.

If the new lines being discussed now had been started seven years ago, the investment would have created jobs when they were needed, and by now would be paying both economic and social dividends. London would have been well set up for the 1990s. Instead, its citizens face years of regular inconvenience and occasional chaos. ●



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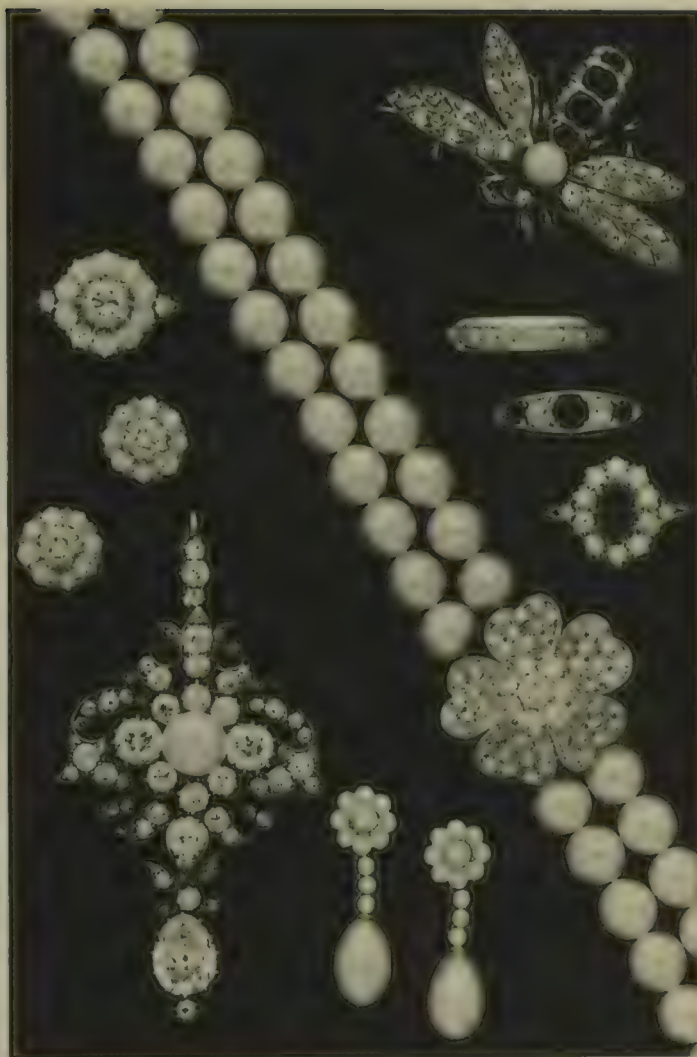
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LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

New proposals may unblock the capital's jam.

MICHAEL HAMER explains



N.B. THIS KEY REFERS TO NUMBERS IN COLOURED CIRCLES ONLY

1. A rail link between Heathrow and Paddington, due to open in 1993
2. A new line between Shepherd's Bush and Turnham Green will divert Heathrow trains on to the Central Line, while Central Line trains from Ealing Broadway will be diverted on to the Bakerloo line
3. A motorway to run from Shepherd's Bush to the River

4. The Northern Lines to Barnet and Edgware to become completely separate, with an extension of one branch to Streatham or Peckham and the other to Morden
5. King's Cross, set to become the hub of all London's transport
6. A network of toll roads to link Hackney, Highbury, Finsbury Park and Highgate to King's Cross
7. Extensions of the Dockland Light Railway to Beckton and Lewisham

8. Bakerloo Line to extend to Canary Wharf
9. The Croydon Tramway, linking Croydon to Wimbledon and Elmers End
10. A toll road to run along the bed of the Thames from the A4 to Chayne Walk
11. An extension of the M23 to the South Circular
12. The South Circular to be widened or to have an entirely new road built alongside it
13. The East London River Crossing, at Thamesmead, giving easier passage between the North and South Circulars

The tubes are crowded and filthy, buses come in threes at irregular intervals and other road traffic in London just manages to shift out of first gear to reach average speeds of slightly more than 11 mph during the daytime. Nowhere is the past lack of investment in transport quite so evident as in the capital, and nowhere in Britain is the business of moving about quite so frustrating.

There are many signs, though, that the situation is at last going to change, that Whitehall and the disparate bodies which preside over the

planning of the capital are thinking about the next decade, indeed the next century.

By the year 2000, people may be driving along a tunnel on the bed of the Thames or on toll roads equipped with computers that automatically log the identity of the car and send out monthly bills to its owner. There are plans for large areas of pedestrianisation, new tube lines, rail links and, in one area on the periphery of the capital, the re-introduction of trams.

● The Government indicated a fresh approach by its approval in July for two new schemes

costing £200 million. The first is a rail link from Paddington to Heathrow, due to open in 1993, which will make a journey time of only 17 minutes.

The second is for a new road bridge across the Thames at Thamesmead, uniting the North and South Circular roads. The East London River Crossing (ELRC) should open in 1994. Changes have been made to its original design which included a suspension bridge which would have blocked the path of jets taking off from the nearby Docklands airport.



*If dinner hadn't already existed it would
have been necessary to invent it.*



● It is the King's Cross redevelopment which conveys the full scope of the changes envisaged. King's Cross, with the neighbouring main line station of St Pancras, is an immense site, twice the size of St James's Park. It is capable not only of handling all Channel Tunnel trains destined for the Midlands and the North, but also of supplanting Waterloo as the Tunnel's London terminus.

The present plans, part of a scheme by the London Regeneration Consortium, include a six-platform station south of the Thames for the Channel Tunnel trains, to open in 1993.

King's Cross could also become the nub of an international transport network. British Rail is contemplating moving the terminus for Stansted airport trains from Liverpool Street to St Pancras, and the Thameslink trains already run from King's Cross to Gatwick. It has been suggested that it would be logical to link Heathrow to King's Cross rather than to Paddington.

● However, it is the tubes, not British Rail, which are in most urgent need of reform. The aging system is now so overcrowded that stations sometimes have to be closed in the rush hours to prevent passengers being pushed on to the rails. The problem, particularly bad at the Angel, Liverpool Street and Victoria, is expected to get much worse with maybe 30 per cent more passengers travelling on the tube over the next five years. To accommodate this increase, the Central London Rail Study Group has proposed several major changes. These include a new line, running in a figure-of-eight centred upon Oxford Circus, and the possibility of some Heathrow trains being diverted on to the Central Line.

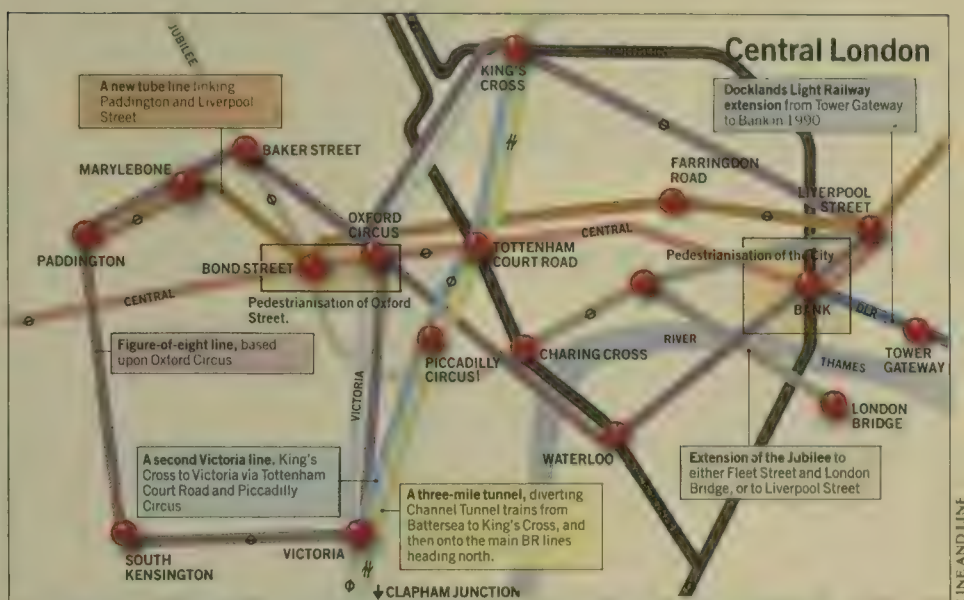
● One scheme almost certain to go ahead is the division into two of the Northern Line, which has an unenviable reputation for unreliability. The problem is the bottleneck at Camden Town, the junction of the Barnet and Edgware branches of the Northern Line. By making them quite separate, at a cost of £22 million, the frequency of Northern Line trains will increase from 24 to 30 an hour.

● The study group then envisages extending the Northern to Streatham or Peckham, and the Bakerloo, one of the few lines which is not overcrowded, to Canary Wharf in Docklands, where there is a powerful business lobby pushing for an extension.

New tube lines do not come cheap, though. No one has seriously tried to estimate the cost of the "figure-of-eight" line, but extending the Northern Line to Streatham, for example, would cost £250 million.

● Plans for new roads are less advanced, but even more controversial. The West London Assessment Study has proposed the most expensive motorway ever to be built in Britain, a £200 million road running just over a mile from Shepherd's Bush to the Thames embankment at Cheyne Walk. This would relieve one of London's worst black spots: the Earls Court one-way system. There are deeply felt anxieties about the scheme and there have been suggestions that it should follow the current rail system under ground, which might make it live up to its somewhat hopeful name—the Western Environmental Improvement Route.

● Associated with the above plan, Costain, the



New tube lines and railways could reach parts of London up to now inaccessible by rail

building firm, have suggested that the western traffic then follows a road tunnel built under the bed of the Thames, that would run straight through the capital. The plan has now been modified so that the motorists would leave the tunnel in the centre of the city and park along the banks of the river on land currently awaiting development.

● There are many radical suggestions to curb and speed up traffic in central London. One is for a network of toll roads linking King's Cross with Highgate in north London. These toll roads have provoked widespread opposition. The Association of London Authorities, which represents most of the inner London councils, calculates that the toll for each vehicle would need to be about £30 in order to make the roads pay. Furthermore, it is probable that the roads would be open only during the day, since they depend on frustrated drivers seeking a quick thoroughway during the rush hour; evening traffic is far less congested. Finally, there is the awkward political fact that the scheme threatens 5,000 homes in north London.

● London Regional Transport's plan to reintroduce trams to Croydon is one of several smaller-scale studies going on. This involves joining two railway lines, from East Croydon to Elmers End and West Croydon to Wimbledon, by a tramway through Croydon. It has even been mooted that trams could be reintroduced in a limited way in Central London.

There is mounting pressure to create large pedestrianised areas in the centre of the capital, which would be strictly served by public transport. Even deliveries would be banned during the main business hours. The prime target for pedestrianisation is Oxford Street and the area stretching south to Trafalgar Square. The proposed western boundary would be Park Lane and, in the east, Tottenham Court Road. The resistance to this idea is great, particularly from businesses in the West End. A similar, but more extensive, pedestrianisation was enforced in Milan last month and was accompanied by great public anger, for the journey across the city was immediately increased by hours. In London this would have to be associated with an improvement of public transport, in the car parking facilities outside the "no-go" area and

in the routes that traverse the capital.

The biggest question is whether any of these schemes will make the slightest difference to London's traffic chaos. John Adams and Martin Mogridge, researchers at London's University College, have pointed out that the speed of the rush-hour traffic on the North Circular is 23 miles an hour, exactly what it was 50 years ago, despite extensive widening. Another historical rebuff to the planners is that traffic in Notting Hill Gate is now just as bad as it was before the Westway was built.

In view of all these factors, none of the roads may be built. Ministers will not receive the final reports from the assessment studies until next summer and, even if they decide to build, there will be public inquiries lasting two years or more.

The rail improvements therefore seem a better bet. For a start, there is more scope for private financing of railways. The newly-privatised British Airports Authority is defraying 80 per cent of the cost of the proposed Heathrow to Paddington line, and the Docklands Development Corporation is financing the extension of the Light Railway to Beckton by selling off land adjoining the line.

Transport experts also agree that new rail links are more practical in central London because they use space more efficiently. The cost of office space doubles, to around £200 a square foot, when a company has to provide parking facilities.

The one general disappointment is that the Central London Rail Study has not produced any schemes for British Rail and Underground trains to run on each other's lines. Martin Mogridge says: "I would take all commuter services all the way through the centre to the other side—some would be by BR, some would be by Underground."

However, if the Government backs the rail plans this autumn, progress could be comparatively swift. The first stage of the Docklands Light Railway was planned and constructed in six years, between 1981 and 1987. So a new Underground line, allowing for the necessary parliamentary legislation, could be running by 1995. And not a minute before time for the beleaguered commuters.

DAVID GODDARD

A room of my own.

IT USED TO BE SAID THAT EVERY NEW BORN CHILD LOOKED LIKE WINSTON CHURCHILL – mine looked like Sidney Greenstreet! So says David Goddard, troubleshooter with a major bank group. A job which you'd expect to be tough but one which he coyly describes as a cake walk. Nothing, but nothing it seems compares to the demanding business of bringing up (with his wife Kay), 3 professional trouble makers.

A friend of mine told me that when you start a family, Sunday stops being a four hour day. A typical Sunday for David begins with youngest son Neil, 2, getting dressed – while jumping on 'Daddy's' head. It's a little game of his.

If David Goddard has one ambition however, it is to come out of these early years of fatherhood with his sanity intact. Difficult, but not impossible. His first idea, a 'no go' area in their home, an 'adult sanctuary' as he calls it was a good one.

One flaw – small children break rules. Then came promotion and with it the chance of a nice big prestigious saloon. A full minute of total euphoria followed. Then he remembered the Renault Espace from the Paris motor show. Remembering it too as being the ideal 'kiddie carrier'. Why not also the perfect retreat to spend an hour or so? He ordered the latest 2000-1 'p.d.g.'

Take our kids for example. (Please, please, take our kids!) The back seats he says tend to get bagged first. They are highly prized – Kids kudos, if you like. To them the Espace is on a par with a bright red sports car.

As for long journeys: A simple trip to the in-laws (in our case, Chester) is 2½ hours. That's 150 minutes of wall to wall bickering, fighting, crying, wingeing, a night-mare, right?

'Not in the Espace. First you stick all their favourite toys in. Then you stick them in. (You may or may not want to turn the middle seat into a games table) Pop a story book cassette into the stereo, and turn down the front speakers to allow the grown-ups to chat! The effect? Like putting them in another room. Sheer bliss!'

The middle and rear seats also come out so it's useful in other ways too.



Last week he took a sofa that had been patiently waiting to be thrown out for ten years, down to the dump. 'Funny, somehow my knees always ended up round my ears in the old car.'

They take friends out on outings, sometimes as

many as five at a time. Kay also likes to go shopping in it. (She likes to go shopping full stop.) 'Once,' he says 'she brought home an old piano.'

Home is a large red brick Georgian house in St. Albans. They call the Espace their extension.

When not in use his roomsits out in the garage – which isn't often. His favourite feature in his Espace

is the 6 speaker stereo. On his own he likes nothing better than to play it really loud. The space seems to improve the acoustics. The sound tends to stick between the seats, in other cars.


Going back to his old car he adds would be like purgatory. 'No one could ever accuse you of buying an Espace just because it looks different, (it has two sunroofs), it has far too many good points for that.'

Indeed future plans include a possible driving holiday down through a few of the French wine regions (Bordeaux is already pencilled in.) 'We're all looking forward to it – driver included.'

We left David planning the trip, parked in one of the many quiet little beauty spots not far from his home.

Just him, the Sunday newspapers and Verdi.

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CLIVE BOURSNEILL

FEAR, LOATHING AND AMATEURISM

Redmond O'Hanlon's, last work was described as "the funniest travel book ever". The account of his latest expedition up the Amazon is darker, but the humour still shines through the insanity and barbarity that he found.

By Michael Watts



SIMON STOCKTON

Three years ago an amateur photographer named Simon Stockton found himself up the Amazon—somewhat implausibly, since his actual profession was managing a London casino. On his return, this tyro-explorer had formulated two basic laws of the jungle. Never shave, for fear of nicking the skin and inviting septicaemia; and restrain the need to break wind, since a diet of cayman and piranha fish makes the stomach prone to diarrhoea. A third law, born of actual disaster, became implicit in any subsequent discussion of his journey: beware of accompanying the intrepid traveller and author Redmond O'Hanlon, for the consequences can

Above: O'Hanlon in trouble again. His boat gets stuck, somewhere between the Orinoco and the Amazon. Left: In the bosom of his family, at Pelican House in Oxfordshire, a place of retreat from adventures

be even worse than blood poisoning, or soiled khaki. In Stockton's case, he apparently went a little mad.

Had he but taken the advice of James Fenton, the poet and war correspondent, he would never have set foot outside the Cromwell Mint Casino. Fenton was O'Hanlon's companion on a previous journey, to the mountains of Batu Tiban. This was recounted in *Into the Heart of Borneo*, which Eric Newby called "the funniest travel book I have ever read". It was Fenton, a lordly, Buddha-like presence, who had intended to compose their adventures, but he relinquished the idea to O'Hanlon out of a deep desire to forget the boating accident which cost him his equilibrium and almost his life. So when O'Hanlon, emboldened by the book's success, suggested another river trip, between the Orinoco and the Amazon, he met with a very cool response. "I would not go with you to High Wycombe," Fenton said, and warned his eventual replacement: "You'll regret it."

Stockton is an amiable, garrulous chap in his 30s, with a 60-fags-a-day habit: Urban Man



incarnate. O'Hanlon, who is also the author, *passim*, of *Changing Scientific Concepts of Nature in the English Novel, 1850-1920*, is big and shambling, with a round, monkish face and granny glasses; but at least he has had SAS training. Right from the start, Stockton appeared peculiarly unfitted for jungle-life, although O'Hanlon's enthusiastic tales, and repeated viewings of the epic film *Fitzcarraldo*, rendered him a willing accomplice. His raffish existence was more suited to the Playboy parties of Hugh Hefner than the Travellers' Club or Fenton's literary salons. But it was precisely his Jack-the-Lad qualities which attracted his friend O'Hanlon, who saw in him a foil, like Fenton, for humorous peregrinations.

"I'm the one these guys at literary parties write about in their own books," Stockton boasts, beguilingly, when taxed about his relationship with O'Hanlon. "I'm this street-wise character, effing and blinding, who's not afraid to say to Julian Barnes, 'you're a fascist bastard'. And Redmond loves it. Not only that, like a lot of my married friends, he likes living out his fantasies through me because I was such a bastard, working in the gambling business where there were so many sexy, young women, thick as two short planks, who were dying to



SIMON STOCKTON



EREMIO O'HANLON

Above left: Simon Stockton, O'Hanlon's companion and photographer, yearned for home and had to be flown out of the jungle. Above: Heavy rains made exploration of the Maturaca impassable. Left: The *candiru*, a parasitical fish which invades bodily orifices. Opposite: Tribesmen of the Yanomami, "the fierce people" of the Amazon, snorting yoppo, a hallucinogenic drug.

jump into bed with me."

O'Hanlon secretly hoped, purely in the interests of research, that South American Indian girls would react the same way, but he was disappointed in this, as in his wish to navigate the Maturaca, an unexplored Amazonian tributary, which the rains made impassable. But he did succeed in meeting the Yanomami, "the fierce people" of the Amazon basin, who are possibly the first people to have reached South America from the North. This lethally dangerous, now vanishing, tribe honoured him by administering the hallucinogenic snuff drug, *yoppo*, with appallingly farcical results.

In *Trouble Again*, the account of his travels over three-and-a-half months, follows the unlikely pair of "Stocky" and "Fatso" as they muddle through with recalcitrant Indian guides, beset by jaguars, anacondas and the night-marish *candiru* or toothpick-fish, which swims up the penises of unwary bathers, and must be surgically removed (O'Hanlon adapted his cricket-box as a prophylactic).

sleeping away the long nights of boredom. Then his expensive cameras seized up with mould, and the film turned to soup. Asked to photograph a coral snake, he snapped, "I ain't taking that? Fucking snakes give me creeps!"

Finally, he confessed to O'Hanlon: "You get excited every time you see a new bird. Whereas me, in all honesty, Redmond, I just think, well, there goes another fucking bird. . . . There's no wine, and no women, and no song, and nowhere sensible to shit." So he never did blow *yoppo* with the Yanomami. While O'Hanlon pressed on, remorseful but anxious how his book would now be affected, the marines flew Stockton out of the Amazon for good. He had been there a month.

It makes a wonderful tragi-comedy; but did Stockton really go barking mad?" O'Hanlon says so: "He was shaking all over, and shouting for 'tomato ketchup, doctor'." A faint smile. Stockton, admitting that he was deeply unhappy, stoutly maintains his sanity. "No way I went off my chump. I actually got sensible. That's really what happened. The fun dis-

the actress Jane Asher. Beaming amid this exotic squalor sits the deceptively mild man of Borneo, as one newspaper called him, tucking into a hearty lunch bagged at Tesco's. O'Hanlon lost two-and-a-half stones in South America; though, ironically, the bout of hepatitis which followed he blames on a Chinese meal in Mill Hill.

Mr and Mrs O'Hanlon are a most tender couple. When Belinda suffered from shingles, Redmond joined her in bed for a month in order to provide company. She repaid him up the Amazon. At his most lost and forlorn, he opened one of the maps to find the imprint of a baby's foot covering a portion of the tropical rain forest. Further inspection of his maps and unused notebooks produced more feet, together with the impression of a hand, and a note from Belinda reading "come back to me and Puffin safely". Before he had left she had dipped Puffin's hands into red paint and made the marks.

He certainly does not look or act tough; more like a sedentary, laid-back academic, which, in a Senior Visitor of St Antony's, seems perfectly appropriate. Although his conversation is generally limited to discussing sex, the SAS, and bugs, the parties he holds at Pelican House are full of the literary talent of his generation, and include Martin Amis, Bruce Chatwin, Alexander Cockburn and the poet Craig Raine, who calls him 'Redsy'. But impulsive schoolboy mischief always lurks around the river-bend. Unsuspecting visitors are sometimes dragged upstairs to his "fetish room" and shown an old Maxwell House coffee jar containing an indefinably dark, crinkly object. This, he will reverently announce, is part of a charred foot belonging to Douglas Winchester, a friend since childhood who burned himself to death as a result of depression. O'Hanlon went to the London park where he did it and scraped up the remains. The story, which *In Trouble Again* recounts, may well be true. It scared the hell out of Stockton.

His fascination with anatomy has more conventional antecedents. Educated at Marlborough and Merton College, Oxford, where he studied English, he had originally wanted to be a doctor, and attended dissection classes. "They brought in an 18-year-old girl, out of a vat full of formalin," he recalls, a sorrowful look on his puddingy face. "Her breasts were just a series of wrinkles; they go white because of the formalin. Anyway, they opened up her gut, and there was an 18-foot tapeworm inside her, and the demonstrator said, 'Oh, wonderful!' because they're rare like that and worth a lot of money in slides to schools. But I just took my coat off and fled, babbling something about 'I really don't belong here'." A laconic chuckle chases the anecdote.

His subsequent career has the riotous quality of a Tom Sharpe novel, notwithstanding long periods of torpor which confound his friends and publishers. At 17 he was sent down from Merton for writing and disseminating (though not publishing) a salacious novel, which the authorities feared would bring the college into disrepute. He was also dismissed for teaching Hertford College girls the wrong course in English literature, and spent agonising days in a public park before he could force himself to tell his wife. But his talent for trouble was most



REDMOND O'HANLON

The book, which owes a debt to Peter Fleming's *Brazilian Adventure*, nonetheless establishes its own pattern of travel writing. It combines serious anthropology, interpolating passages from Victorian naturalists, with deadpan dialogue and the narrative instincts of the best documentaries. The lumbering O'Hanlon, with his protective ointments and crutch powder, is a comic, self-deprecating figure, provoked by insatiable curiosity yet armoured by innocence, a melancholy humourist even when his *pinga* (see *candiru*) turns green from tapir-ticks. Stockton, on the other hand, is the cocky representative of soft civilisation. Each night, in his hammock, he records mucky tape messages for his mistress back home. "Dear Angel-drawers," they begin, and invariably end, "I kiss your boobs."

But gradually, as the jungle closed in, the differences between the two were exacerbated. Wide-eyed at first, Stocky quickly grew disenchanted with the absence of home comforts. Shuddering at O'Hanlon gutting his kills, he thought nostalgically of his local supermarket in West Drayton, where the chickens were frozen, with giblets in plastic bags. Unable to speak Spanish with the guides, he was further frustrated by O'Hanlon's priceless gift for

appeared. I lost my friend. He wasn't the person I had known. I've got pictures of him in his bloodlust, slashing things open, that you won't believe."

Friendship has since resumed, but Stockton went back to his old casino job horribly subdued. He married Liz, a teacher for the disabled, and now claims fidelity. He worries that O'Hanlon's readers will see him as "Dirty Den of the jungle". But, the oddest thing, he does not regret having gone. "Never. Never. I would never have swapped it for anything. Just bits and pieces I'd have changed."

O'Hanlon says of him: "He's normal now. Super-normal. Got respectable. In fact, I think he did quite well to last that long."

Redmond O'Hanlon lives in Oxfordshire, in a cramped stone cottage called Pelican House, with Belinda, his wife of 20 years, daughter Puffin, and baby son Galen (after Galen Strawson, a colleague on *The Times Literary Supplement*). A sprawling library of literature and anthropology jostles for space with postcards and cuttings of medieval religious scenes, a stuffed pelican, cups and plates harbouring penicillin culture, and old photos of Belinda resembling

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"It's only poisonous a little"

Rounding a bend on the narrowing river, the engine throttled back, we put a Cattle-Egret-sized Yellow Heron to flight from its fishing-place, and, with mounting excitement, I failed to find it in Schauensee. Perhaps it was just too rare to earn a place? The unrecorded Emoni yellow snake-eating heron, *Snakonoshicus redmondus*? But no—a sharp little note informed me that the Capped Heron “becomes buffy in breeding season”; they just go yellow with desire. I turned and waved my binoculars at Chimo in an onrush of pleasure; and was rewarded with the toothless grandfather of all grins.

About 15 bends farther on I was leaning back against the rice-sack, admiring a flight of eight pairs of Blue-and-Yellow Macaws, their long, pointed tails streaming, their bare-skinned faces turned down to look at us, their dirty-old-crone laughter, their terminal, General Paralysis of the Insane, syphilitic shrieks filling the air, when Chimo suddenly swung the dugouts right round and headed back downstream, pointing at the opposite bank. Galvis, sitting opposite me in the other boat, looked up in alarm from his interminable study of the ancient copy of *Reader's Digest*.

Something was arranged in sagging loops along a fallen tree trunk at the water's edge, half-observed by the lower leaves of upstanding lateral shoots. It was big and brown and coiled and glistening in the sun; it was an anaconda.

Chimo shut off the engine and we drifted down towards it in the current. It had rough star-shaped black rings set on a yellow background down the middle of its bulky flanks; overall it was a light brown, its head,

resting in the middle of its circling body, was a duller brown and surprisingly small—mostly mouth. I leaned closer, over the side of the canoe, to get a decent portrait with my inadequate, fixed wide-angle lens, and, from three feet away, found myself looking into its tiny, brown, impassive, piggy eyes. Galvis, unable to bear the tension any longer, yelped. The head reared an inch or two and flicked backwards; the coils seemed to lash only once; and the snake, with unnerving speed, disappeared into the watery undergrowth.

“It's a baby,” said Juan, as Chimo restarted the engine and turned the dugouts round again, “it's the smallest I've ever seen. It's about nine feet.”

“They may be three feet long when they're born,” I said, annoyed, “but then they're only an inch thick. So it wasn't *that* young.”

“When they go old,” said Juan, “they go blue.”

“He came to see us,” said Chimo, “because we talked about him. It is not good to talk too much.”

About an hour later Chimo pointed to a small snake's head, upright in the water, crossing the river from right to left.

“Bejuquilla” he announced, grinning, swinging the two pole-linked dugouts towards it.

The snake, finding its way momentarily barred by the side of the dugout, simply lifted itself up and came aboard, exactly where Chimo had intended. Its narrow little head had been misleading; a full six feet of thin, green-backed, yellow-flanked, white-bellied, red-tongued snake looped down in front of Galvis.

Galvis, his imagination, presumably, still scaly with anacondas, began to yell as if he

meant it, a long cry that began low and rose rapidly in pitch; he stood up on his plank seat and threw his copy of *Reader's Digest* overboard.

The snake, unappeased, reared towards his crutch. Galvis, with equal decisiveness, jumped. Arms flung forward and long legs trailing, like a gibbon, he flew easily across the gap between the boats, over the front edge of our covered cargo, and into the arms of Culimacaré in the bow. Chimo, howling with laughter, zig-zagged the canoes. The snake drew itself up, spanned the gap between the dugouts and came for me as I took its long green blur of a portrait. It undulated a couple of half-cartwheels under my elbow, thrashed onto the top of the tarpaulin, and—across my spare pair of trousers, which I had spread to dry—it made for Jarivanau. Jarivanau backed towards Chimo, grabbed the trousers and flicked the snake into the water. His new pipe, which he had laid in pride of place in front of him, went with it.

Pablo gave a whoop, threw his right gumboot into the air and caught it; Culimacaré spluttered in Curipaco, jiggling his arm up and down; even Valentine looked happy.

“It's a Green Vine Snake,” said Juan, “it's only poisonous a little.”

Galvis climbed sheepishly back to his plank.

“Never mind,” he said, “I have two more books. I have the story of the life of Marie Antoinette and the story of the life of Mahatma Gandhi.”

“That bejuquilla was after your arse,” said Chimo, wiping his old eyes.

From In Trouble Again: A Journey Between the Orinoco and the Amazon, published by Hamish Hamilton this month, £14.95

amply rewarded when HM Customs & Excise investigated his innocent involvement with the drug-dealer Howard Marks, a fellow director in the 70s of Annabelinda, his wife's up-market Oxford dress shop. Marks was suspected of using the Annabelinda business for laundering drug money.

“I felt like a real gangster,” O'Hanlon remembers with quiet glee. “The cops had been watching too much *Monty Python*. They slammed me in the back of their car and rushed me off to Wormwood Scrubs, where all the dogs come up and nose your crutch. They were looking for signs of untold wealth. I told them, you must see my stuffed herring-gull. It was all scenes from Conrad, straight out of *Secret Agent*. Seemed wonderful to me, actually.”

Something of a refugee from the 60s, O'Hanlon is also a product of eccentric genes. The son of a vicar and an actress (no sniggers), he was born in Dorset and brought up in Calne, Wiltshire—“My papa says the Devil crept in through the back door and fertilised my mother.” His mother had acted in the first production of *Murder in the Cathedral*, and aspired to be Dame Sybil Thorndike until the



Food was usually a stew of piranha fish and cayman, which O'Hanlon gutted

Mothers' Union took precedence. His father had the clergyman's interest in Darwinism. The ancestry, of course, is Irish, from near Crossmaglen, although the family castle has long since changed hands. What survives is Irish hospitality. After appearing three times on the Terry Wogan show, he invited the great man down to Oxford, and was generous with the drink, so much so that Wogan, apparently, had

to keep interrupting his journey back to London: “Kids in the back of cars were shouting, ‘Mam, there's Terry Wogan having a piss in the hedge!’”

He clearly enjoys the glamour and applause which *Into the Heart of Borneo* showered upon him unawares, and he takes a vast, bemused delight in its projected filming as a sort of Oxford version of *Indiana Jones*. Hollywood has set the opening in the Bodleian library. He is to be played by Harrison Ford, and the bald, eloquent Fenton (can it be true?) by Robert De Niro. But the expectations *Borneo* aroused imposed a heavy burden on the Amazon trip before it had even begun. The next book had to be even better; he could not count this time on kindly literary cronies. That meant taking charge more completely than he had done in *Borneo*. And one of his biggest mistakes, according to Stockton, was to appoint himself paymaster: “An exhausting experience for a man who doesn't quite know the difference between a penny and a pound. Belinda, who has an incredible business brain, has indulged and supported him all his working life.”

In Trouble Again is a far darker work than

Borneo, and O'Hanlon's expression changes when discussing it. For a couple of years after his return he had difficulty writing, and the book had to be completed in four months. He partly attributes this writer's block to Stockton's misadventure: "I thought it was my fault that he got the way he was. I got him in over his head. And I was in over my head, too."

The Amazon, he discovered, was not like Borneo, where there was always plenty of *tuak*, the local hooch, to alleviate discomforts, and where the tribes' matriarchal, sexually permissive society lacked the male aggression of the Yanomami and their preoccupation with murder. Almost half the Yanomami men, he learned with mixed feelings, die from raids or fights within the tribe. Their ritual duels, which invariably escalate into full-scale tribal battles, require each combatant to expose his bare head to blows from a club shaped like a pool cue. And their mistrust of white men is pathological; understandably so, given the genocidal policies of South American governments.

"Borneo always seemed like a game," he reflects, wistfully, "even though I knew I was going to write a book. But in the Amazon... I remember once looking up the shafts of these six-foot-long arrows, and then looking down and seeing these little guys with their dicks tied up with string around their stomachs, and I thought, 'God, how wonderful! I've got a story.' And then I thought, 'But they're gonna kill me.'" He laughs, abruptly, without mirth. "They were half-thinking about killing us for our packs, I'm sure."

So what happened, after the giving of presents and the taking of *yoppo*? "Well, we ran away," he says, with a wan smile, "which I was rather sad about. We gave away the presents too fast, and we ran out of food. Then we walked very fast. This is when I lost a couple of stones, thinking that their warriors would come. They just shoot you as you pass, so every time a bush moved, you'd think, 'this is it'. You rely entirely on your peaceful Indians, the men you pay to take you there, and they get fond of you, and you get fond of them; and when they get frightened, you get terrified. The Yanomami are the most violent creatures."

He goes and fetches some photographs. "Look, they beat their women up." One photo is of a woman, probably in her mid-20s, with unnaturally twisted fingers. "They've been crushed by her husband because she didn't make his food quickly enough. But they've all got damaged fingers. Only the old women are safe, and they become very precious. They're used as emissaries, or to pick up corpses lost in battle. Anyone else would get killed or gang-raped on the way."

Desperate to locate these jungle psychopaths after Stockton's departure, then petrified by their actual presence, he sought reassurance in the thought that they were "good value" as a story. However corny it may sound, he contends that he always tried to remain conscious of his readers, no matter how tight the spot; and that the pleasures and purpose of exploring lie not just in sighting rare wildlife, but in communicating the experience to print. In one respect, therefore, but one alone, was the Amazon easier than Borneo: at least he could



REDMOND O'HANLON



Above: Yanomami women, who are often badly beaten by their aggressive menfolk, or captured and raped by enemy tribes. Left: O'Hanlon with his Indian guides, who feared the Yanomami.

make notes without infuriating Fenton, the "official" author, whom he was compelled to hoodwink by writing "pretend" letters, to Belinda and putting them away sealed.

But there will be no Fenton, and certainly no Stocky, on his third exploration next May, and the photographer Don McCullin has firmly declined as well. Instead, an American biologist named Larry Schaffer, a professional this time, will go with him to the Congo, the real heart of darkness towards which all his books are inexorably leading. Travelling from the Central African Republic to north-west Zaire, they are

destined for a pocket of completely uninhabited jungle, allegedly the one area on earth where the rainforest is growing back.

And what does he hope to find there? "Dinosaurs," he replies, unblinkingly. "Probably small saurapods," the species which includes brontosaurus and diplodocus.

There is a pregnant pause, and then a little giggle. "Oh, well, on second thoughts, perhaps you'd better admit that's a joke."

"Old Redmond," says Stockton, not without affection, "he should end up in a glass case in a museum." ●

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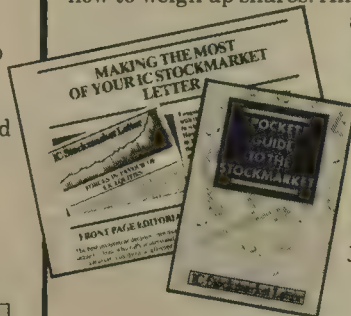
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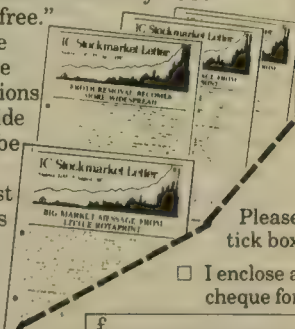
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Sacred Cow

Jack-knife of all trades

by Graham Vickers



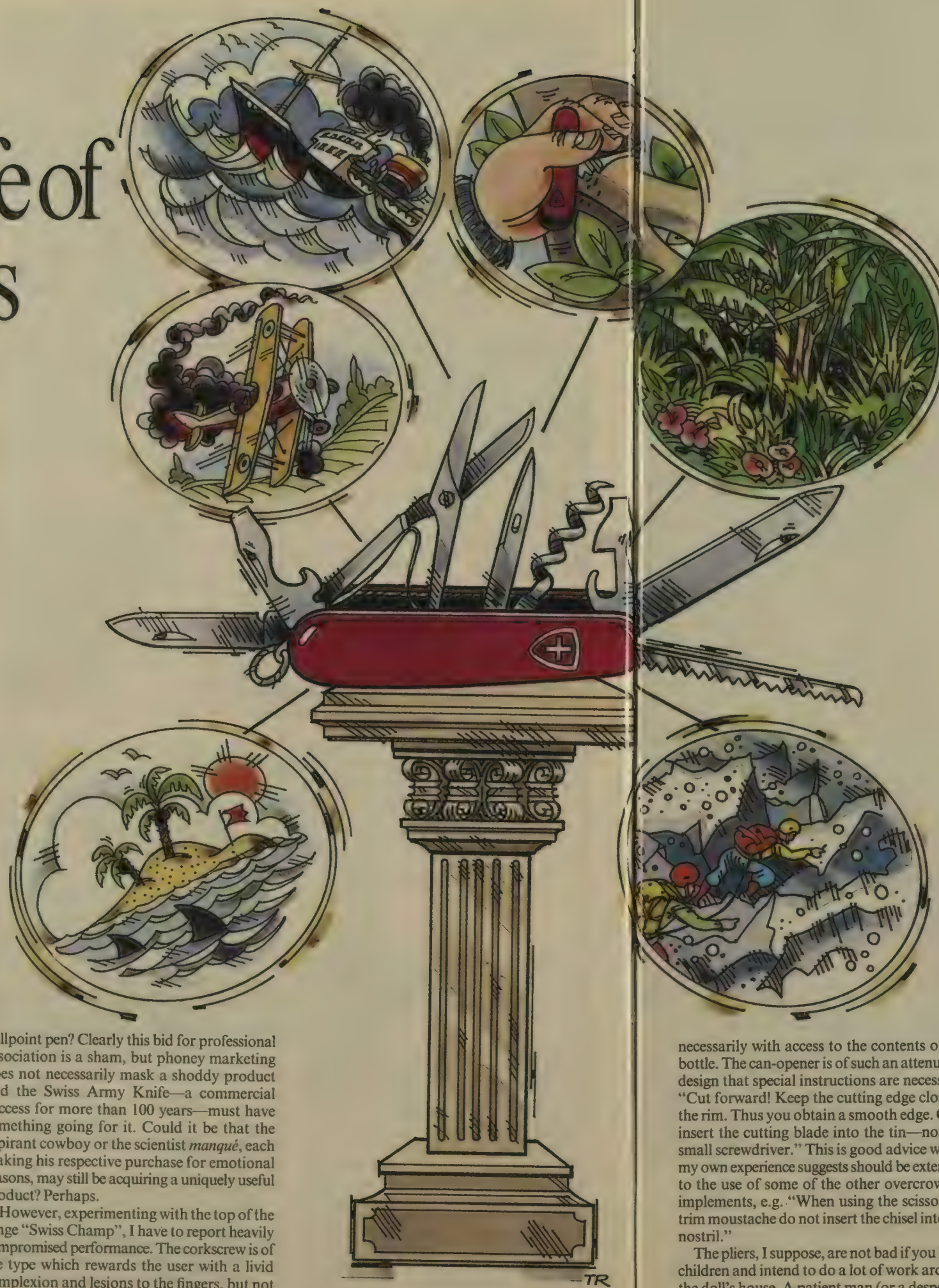
Admittedly it is a beguiling thing, as cutlery goes. The red handle and its inlaid silver cross simultaneously connote luxury and seriousness of purpose. The dogged ingenuity of its construction confirms all you ever suspected about Swiss thoroughness. The military tag adds a touch of authority, even if the *gloire* and resourcefulness of the army in question must remain matters of conjecture for most of us. Finally, the price confirms that this must be one hell of a pen-knife. Nonetheless, the Swiss Army Knife steadfastly remains one of the most comprehensively useless gadgets ever devised. Also there is some evidence to suggest that it endures as a revered object for reasons quite unconnected with its popular image as a well-designed talisman of good taste which also happens to identify its owner as a discreetly practical person.

First, though, consider the product itself... or rather the products. At the last count the Swiss Army Knife came in 98 different configurations, each identified by the presumed activity or profession of the target customer. The standard nine blades, around which all others are ranged, suggest that the basic consumer, according to the Swiss, is likely to be a pipe-smoking electrician inclined towards alcoholism. Why else would the standard tool-kit include reamer, wire-stripper, can opener, cap-lifter and corkscrew?

The rest of the range is also based upon some rather strange assumptions. Why, for example, does the "Grand Prix"—after understandably substituting a screwdriver for the corkscrew—add nail file, tweezers and toothpick? Why does "The Cowboy" have a key ring? Why should "The Executive" alone be furnished with an orange-peeler? And by what condescending logic is "The Scientist" equipped with a minuscule magnifying glass and a fun-size

ballpoint pen? Clearly this bid for professional association is a sham, but phoney marketing does not necessarily mask a shoddy product and the Swiss Army Knife—a commercial success for more than 100 years—must have something going for it. Could it be that the aspirant cowboy or the scientist *manqué*, each making his respective purchase for emotional reasons, may still be acquiring a uniquely useful product? Perhaps.

However, experimenting with the top of the range "Swiss Champ", I have to report heavily compromised performance. The corkscrew is of the type which rewards the user with a livid complexion and lesions to the fingers, but not



necessarily with access to the contents of the bottle. The can-opener is of such an attenuated design that special instructions are necessary: "Cut forward! Keep the cutting edge close to the rim. Thus you obtain a smooth edge. Only insert the cutting blade into the tin—not the small screwdriver." This is good advice which my own experience suggests should be extended to the use of some of the other overcrowded implements, e.g. "When using the scissors to trim moustache do not insert the chisel into the nostril."

The pliers, I suppose, are not bad if you have children and intend to do a lot of work around the doll's house. A patient man (or a desperate

one) might successfully cut through a small piece of wood with the seven-centimetre wood saw without going mad. My own inability to sever a thin piece of wire with the wire-cutters should in no way be taken as conclusive proof that it cannot be done. More positively, there is a reasonable chance that the single Phillips screwdriver blade supplied may be of the exact size you need; on the other hand, should this not be the case, sound Swiss engineering will ensure that you destroy the head of the screw with the first turn. The magnifying glass, however, is so small as to be unarguably useless, although perhaps it is meant to be used only for searching for the knife's quartet of tiny detachable tools—pen, toothpick, mini-screwdriver and tweezers—after you have dropped them in the undergrowth.

Unable to test the fish scaler (which comes complete with hook disgorging and pessimistic ruler—a maximum of six centimetres is calibrated), I can only suspect that it, too, would elicit a patronising smirk from any angler over the age of seven. But to catalogue the inevitable shortcomings of the rest of the tools would be tiresome and is unnecessary. Manifestly a jack-knife of all trades and master of none, "the little red wonder", as its manufacturers affectionately refer to it in their promotional literature, is effective not as a practical implement at all, but rather as a dubious kind of aspirational symbol.

For which of us, as a child, has not stood before a shop window and gazed at the giant motorized display version of the Swiss Army Knife, hypnotised by its semaphoring blades and their promise of rugged adventure? But which of us, by the time we could afford one, still clung to the belief that we would ever seriously use any of its fold-away features at all, let alone deploy them in circumstances of windswept drama? Perhaps Helmut Knosp did. If so, his dream came true, at least according to his letter addressed to the knife's Swiss manufacturers, Victorinox. "I crashed on a flight from Reims, France, to Fribourg i. Breisgau," he begins rather matter-of-factly. "I owe my life to a 'Swiss Army Knife' made by your firm. With its help I was able to cut my way out of the burning wreck of the plane."

Now that is what I call a letter of endorsement and if Herr Knosp did not receive a crate of best cutlery by return post, then there is no justice in the world. Less clear, but equally dramatic, is José Luis Botti's letter from Buenos Aires. "I was stuck in a snow-drift and night was closing in," he writes atmospherically. "Had it not been for my pocket knife, with which I sawed off a branch about 15 centimetres thick to serve as a lever, my life would have been in jeopardy because of the intensive (sic) cold." Quite what Señor Botti levered in order to survive remains a mystery, but some sort of theme, not to mention some sort of literary style, is beginning to emerge here. There is more. Another letter concerning the knife's prodigious versatility records that it was not found wanting when used for "cutting toe-nails at altitude". Obviously the Swiss Army Knife

becomes genuinely useful only in circumstances of freakish or contrived privation... and then, perhaps, only to a certain sort of person.

For confirmation of this, look only to the first paragraph of Chris Bonington's thinly-disguised begging letter to Victorinox: "It was one of your knives which was directly responsible for Doug Scott and Dougal Haston reaching the summit [of Everest]. Doug used it to free Dougal's oxygen system which had become blocked with ice! My only regret was that I lost my own large multi-purpose knife when I left it at one of the camps for an hour or so and I suspect one of our Sherpas neatly exchanged it for one of the smaller, simpler knives."

Those brief extracts, I submit, offer glimpses of an exclusive little world. In it, old-style gentleman heroes prevail, unflappable, dependable, self-effacingly brave. Such men are perhaps not without their concomitant faults, writing, for example, like Captain W.E. Johns on a bad day, or being reflexively inclined to suspect the servants when some of the best cutlery goes missing... but, all in all, they are decent chaps whose golden age has now passed. Not one of them would dream of being seen with any of today's ostentatious survival knives—Rambo-inspired things with a single giant blade big enough to kill an elephant and a hollow handle full of miniature Exocets—because the old-style gentleman hero's appeal lay in concealment of strength, most certainly not in its vulgar display.

Now, what better symbol of such nostalgic qualities exists than the Swiss Army Knife? Like those heroes, most of the time the knife's alleged potency is invisible, with only solidity and bulk offering hints as to hidden strength. But when the character-testing moment finally arrives, on frozen slope or desert island, in wounded biplane or on runaway train, the appropriate response is quietly unfolded. Click.

It is this symbolic quality which assures the Swiss Army Knife of a continuing popularity unconnected with its stunted performance—indeed, were actual usefulness the arbiter, Victorinox could probably count upon worldwide annual sales of little more than two dozen knives. But while men remain children, or else cling to the myths of simpler times—which is more or less the same thing—the Swiss Army Knife is assured of its market. Armchair explorers will continue to carry it to the office and on holiday, even though they know, deep down, that, faced with freak disaster, they themselves would probably not even perform as well as the wire-stripper. They know that as the jungle comes rushing up at them and the radio goes dead, they would emit an unbecoming shriek of panic before clawing for "The Executive", opening it at random and hysterically attacking the inside of the blazing fuselage with the ballpoint pen. Until that day, though, they can pose as potential heroes. The modest cost is no more than a sagging jacket pocket and the harmless pretence that the little red wonder actually is indispensable.



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New materials are changing sporting boundaries. Composite poles now catapult the vaulter towards the bar, and in skiing the real competitors are the manufacturers. But the use of expensive materials in cycling could keep poorer nations out of international competitions.

SPORTING GRACE UNDER PRESSURE

by Matthew Fay



The people who make sporting equipment are not national heroes. We do not, and never will, know their names. They make the bat but they don't play the shots. Increasingly, however, the manufacturers are the prime movers in sport. They represent the new triumph of the instrument over its operator.

They owe their success largely to the development of a new generation of high-tech synthetic materials. In the beginning there was wood, oiled or laminated, used for sporting

bats, sticks, poles and rackets. But wood stretches and warps and it may even break. Then there was metal. Metal, however, is heavy and inflexible, not helpful to (say) the pole-vaulter who needed the bend of the old bamboo pole without the fear that it would snap under him. Finally, there came a range of man-made, magic fibres. First was fibreglass, boosting the world pole-vault record by three feet in less than a decade. Then, elements such as boron and carbon, and synthetics such as Kevlar, were combined with plastic resins to form

composites. These are as strong as metal, often a fraction of its weight—and are moving the margins of sporting achievement.

In sports like skiing and cycling, where hundredths of seconds count, equipment made of different composite materials gives competitors the edge. Successful Olympic and World Cup skiers are indebted to the French, Austrian and American companies which seek ever greater balance and strength in their skis. The secrets of the laboratories where the leading manufacturers refine their products for the likes of Alberto Tomba and Marc Girardelli are jealously guarded. Even sales managers from Badger Sports, sole UK distributors of Atomic Ski and therefore effectively company employees, were steered clear of the Race and Development Departments on a visit to their manufacturers. It is not facetious to argue that at the Calgary Winter Olympics this year the real competitors were the manufacturers, not the skiers who were using their equipment.

Some years ago cycle manufacturers realised why their riders were not going any faster in time trials: the design of the bicycle was wrong. That is not to say they disputed the traditional frame, handlebars and seat arrangement, nor that they objected to the number of wheels on a bike. The problem was that spoke-wheels are not properly aerodynamic, so an Italian company reinvented the wheel—as an outwardly solid disc of carbon fibre. When the carbon disc wheels were first introduced in January 1984, at the World Hour Record race in Mexico, the race winner rode two kilometres farther in an hour than anyone had ever done before. In the years that have followed, disc wheels have become a necessity at all levels of competitive racing, and now retail at £1,600 a pair. The real winners once again are the manufacturers. The losers are the amateurs and cyclists from developing countries, who may not be able to afford to compete.

It is possible to demonstrate change that has not altered the character of sport. Football seems both to have changed and stayed the same. On the one hand, there have been important developments. About 20 years ago football boots were first made with screw-in studs, adaptable to hard and soft pitches, and there have been further advances such as pimpled soles for artificial pitches. Slipping on a modern boot in the changing room, Sir Stanley Matthews would be surprised at how brief and soft it was. Crossing a 1988 laminated plastic football from the right wing on a rainy afternoon, he might be pleased at its resistance to the water, which makes the ball lighter and easier to lift. But the diversity, even the quality, of the game would not strike him as greatly changed.

In the same way, custom-made running shoes and rubberised athletics tracks partly explain why the speeds of today are so different from those of 30 years ago. This does not mean that Roger Bannister, kitted out by Adidas, highly trained and carefully dieted, would not be able to compete with Steve Cram.

Some events, however, have altered in character as a result of technological innovation. The fibreglass pole not only enabled athletes to vault higher, it changed the nature of the discipline. Whereas vaulters using the old metal pole required the strength of Hercules to



LEO MASON



ALL-SPORT

Ivan Lendl demonstrates the advanced, new, lighter and more powerful tennis racket in the 1986 US Open. Cricket bats past and present.

heave themselves over the bar, today's vaulters are catapulted towards it, and they now need gymnastic agility to flick themselves over.

But pole-vaulting is the exception: technological development has tended to emphasise the importance of physical strength in sport. It is only seven years since John McEnroe won Wimbledon using a wooden racket. Now, hardly anyone bothers to make them. Top players use rackets such as the Dunlop 200G, which is made of carbon fibre and nylon. The impact of these rackets on the game can hardly be over-emphasised. Not only does the injection moulding technique pioneered by Dunlop greatly reduce the risk of tennis elbow, it makes the racket lighter and more powerful.

The President of the International Tennis Federation, Philippe Chatrier, among others, is concerned that some of the grace and finesse may have left tennis as a result. Certainly, thundering serves and blistering returns make Boris Becker a representative of this generation

of tennis players, as much as Ilie Nastase, with his delightful touch, suggests a different tradition. Tennis pundits, too, agree that the new rackets make for a faster game. David Lloyd, the former Davis Cup player, has said that after McEnroe took up the Dunlop 200G in 1983, "he lost a bit of his touch but it made his serve virtually unplayable". Correctives have been proposed; the ITF has discussed moving the service line back beyond the baseline, and changing the rules to allow only one serve per point. These moves are, however, considered heavy-handed. The game is more likely to produce the players to suit the rackets for some time.

Cricket, too, has seen changes in the weight of bats and the stitching of balls that belie the continuity of statistics upheld by Wisden. An immediate difference between, for example, Graeme Hick and Don Bradman is that whereas Bradman's bat would have weighed in the region of 2lb 4oz, Hick's probably weighs about 3lb. The heavier bat obviously helps a player to hit the ball harder—but the additional power lent to drive and hook shots is offset by a certain loss of control. Once committed to a stroke, the heavy-bat player finds it difficult to adapt to late movement off the wicket or in the air. In addition, he may have to sacrifice his repertoire of glances, flicks and cuts.

However, if the heavy bat can work against a player, it must surely also take some responsibility for the decline of spin-bowling in the game. The spinner has always relied upon the mis-hit drive or hook, played against the spin, for a proportion of his wickets. The heavier bat has a bigger strike area so that even a mis-timed shot can clear the outfielders. Gordon Jenkins, manager of the Indoor Cricket School at Lord's, feels "very strongly" that the popularity of the heavy bat is detrimental to the game.

The change in the manufacture of cricket balls started in the late 1960s. Counties producing a glut of young, medium-pace, swing bowlers wanted more seam on the ball to exaggerate movement off the pitch. The flax which holds the two halves of the ball together, forming the ball's stitched "equator", is now between a third and a half as thick again as it was 20 years ago. The losers again are the spinners, that aging and beleaguered species—or more accurately, it is the game itself that suffers. Cricket relies, for its poise and peculiarity, on a balance of speed, spin and swing bowling, a balance upset by the bias of the modern ball.

So, what has the spectator lost? In such sports as speed cycling and downhill skiing there has never been much subtlety or depth for the new technology to diminish, and the instrument—the cycle or the ski—simply determines performance more than ever. But the changes to cricket and tennis reflect more than just the urge to break records. They also indicate a rising level of aggression in sport. The batsman defending his wicket must now wear helmet and body-pads to protect himself. The new heavy bat and light tennis racket are pushing their sports into a cul de sac where success is increasingly dependent on brute strength. The finesse, intelligence and diversity of these games is now under threat, and tomorrow's spectators may not know what they have lost. ●

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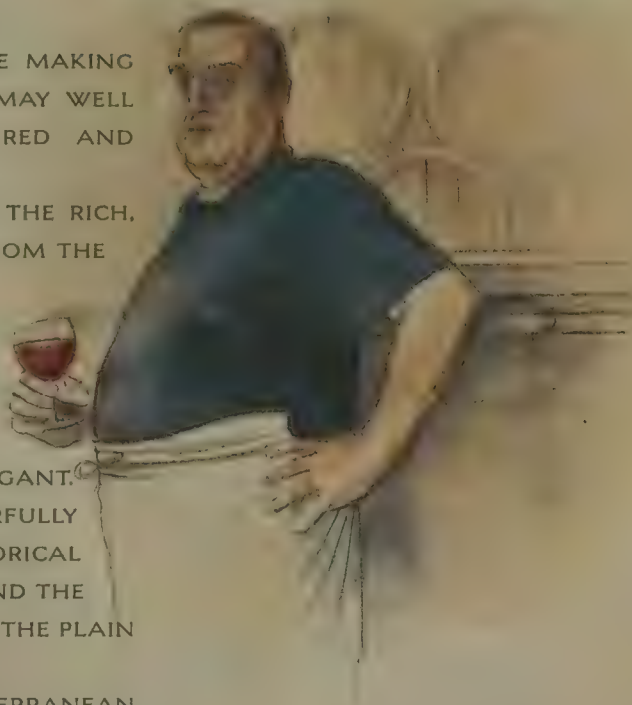
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KITCHEN THERAPY

Matthew Fort creates poulet à l'estragon and domestic harmony



MARTYN GODDARD

I have just finished making what I consider to be quite a good impromptu pudding. It consists of slices of a white peach, from France by way of J. Sainsbury, arranged clockwise around a plate and resting in a pool of lemon syrup. There's a mound of alpine strawberries at the centre of this lunatic display, with a small meringue resting on top like a white bonnet.

The meringue is authentically gooey. I know they're not supposed to be, but that's the way my meringues always turn out. I don't know why. I've tried Mastering the Art. I've tried E. David. I've given J. Grigson a go. I've even taken a tip from R. Blanc. It's no use. They come out gooey. Not good for the dentures, but the punters seem to approve. It was small because I had made it with some mixture left over from making a major pudding last Sunday.

In fact, it's a pudding of leftovers. The peach was left over from last week. The lemon syrup was left over from I can't remem-

ber what. And the alpine strawberries were left by the gourmandising gastropods that infest my garden.

I suppose cooking in the home is all a matter of attitude. I first took to it at university, as a kind of sex substitute. I had just been given the elbow by a nimble and demanding Miss Universe and was feeling a bit down in the mouth about it. I don't know if you remember how you took to being jilted at that age, but if you were like me you became the bore of the century. Oh, the maudlin maundering. No one in the history of the world had ever suffered as I suffered, and I wanted the world to know. The world, however, wasn't so keen.

But—and here is the moral—there is not much that your average British student wouldn't put up with at that time in exchange for a square meal, so I began to cook to ensure a constant supply of sympathetic audiences. It began quite modestly, but I rapidly became more interested in the cooking than in my broken heart.

From there it was onward and upward. It became part of the daily routine.

And so it remains. I return from my work station, march into the kitchen, evict wife, dog and budgerigar, and get to work, or rather to play. It's tremendously thera-

I rapidly became more interested in the cooking than in my broken heart

peutic. You can't boil an egg without giving it half a mind, and anything more complicated requires your full attention, leaving no room for boardroom rows, strategic long-term decisions, what Sandra said to Phillip and what Phillip is going to do about it, little Dickon's exam results, buff envelopes, life assurance, what the bank manager wants to have a

quiet word with you about, and the fact that you've been volunteered for the Aunt Sally stall at the village fête. Just watch the pot, chop the onion, stir the sauce, and the rest of the world can go hang.

While the world hangs, the chef needs fuel: a bottle of the blushful pink Provençal from the Maîtres Vignerons de la Presqu'île de St Tropez is doing the trick in this case. It is a wine which I bought on the strength of its preposterous name from the Albert Wharf Market in Battersea, but which I continue to drink on the strength of its crisp and fruity flavour, to fire the imagination.

To precede the peach surprise, what shall we have tonight? Is it to be the saddle of rabbit *au basilic*? Or shall we give the old pasta machine a quick whirl? She might be happy with a boiled egg, but not I. No, tonight calls for chicken.

Now, in most things we are two minds with but a single thought, my helpmate and I. Not so on the question of meat. The divergence, in our opinions is not quite serious enough to cause a major rift, but it is enough to cause a tight-lipped reappraisal of cooking times and techniques. She likes hers done to the texture and colour of old carpet underlay. I, sensitive aesthete that I am, prefer it blue.

Tonight's chicken is a case in point. You cannot seriously cook one half of a chicken more than another, and yet I like cooking my chicken precisely to a point when the meat is still moist, still has some semblance of texture. This point is usually well short of what she would consider adequate.

Of course, there is the earlier problem of finding a chicken that has a semblance of flavour other than fish meal, and that does not crumble to dust like something from the Tomb of the Pharaohs at the first touch of the knife.

Among the best that are generally available are the "free range" birds from M & S, or those sold under the brand name Moy Park. If you are looking for a really profound experience, you can pick up a poulet de Landes from the Boucherie Lamartine in the Pimlico Road. Naturally you have to pay more than you would for one of the pallid, bulky, tasteless creatures that form the stock of too many food emporia, but the money is well spent.

Nonetheless, even the tastiest chicken needs cheering up. Tarragon is the chosen medium tonight, fresh tarragon, by the fistful, by the bush, tarragon tucked up

COSMOPOLITAN CHIC

Kingsley Amis finds Martin's strong on style, poor on content

between skin and flesh, a branch for each leg, another firmly pushed down between thigh and carcase, more for the breast, and yet more for what the cookery books primly call the cavity, together with salt, pepper and a bit of butter. You can use dried tarragon, but personally I wouldn't bother; the dried herb bears little resemblance to the powerful perfume of the fresh, and there are plenty of more interesting ways of jollying up a chicken without having recourse to dried herbs.

Before I did all the stuffing with the tarragon, I cut off all those bits of rubber band that they seem to truss birds with these days. As you probably know, the major challenge with chicken is to get the legs cooked at the same time as the breast. The point about releasing the legs from their entanglement is that it allows the heat to pass more freely around them as they cook and so increases the chances of getting a drum stick *à point* instead of completely raw.

There are still further precautions to take. Ms David advises one to turn the bird first on this side and then that, 20 minutes each to ensure an even cooking process. Preheat the oven to Gas Mark 6, 400°F, then turn it down to Gas Mark 5, 375°F, when you turn it over. Allow about 1½ hours for a 2lb (drawn weight) bird. Turn it the right way up for the last 10 minutes to give it the uniform, glossy brown finish, and baste it regularly. This particular chicken I am also basting with butter and a glass of Sainsbury's Chambéry Vermouth. The vermouth adds a *frisson* of flavour to the finished article, and means that there will be more juices to go round.

In the meantime, some beet-roots, the size of small plums, from the garden, are bubbling away in another pot, and a few minutes before serving up I pop their tops, drained of the cold water in which they had been resting, into a second saucepan, along with a bit of butter.

I am quite partial to beetroot tops, which tend to get ignored in the run through of vegetable glories. They make a perfectly acceptable dish in their own right, not unlike spinach.

And now my little turtle dove, bring yourself to the table and tuck into a plate of carefully carved *poulet à l'estragon avec des betteraves et ses feuilles*. Tasty? I should say so. What do you mean, yours isn't cooked? ●

Matthew Fort is co-author of the Peter Fort column for the Financial Times

Martin's is right at the top end of Baker Street, just where one of the most continuous traffic jams in central London begins. It can be quite fun of a nasty sort to watch it going on from the drinks table by the street window, especially on a wet morning. I was there when a patron parked his Merc outside on the yellow line, and was sorry not to see him dragged away in the middle of his veal *sauté*.

The bar or drinking area is rather like a small ice-cream parlour, only not so cosy. The single, four-square dining-room is most attractive, prettily decorated in plain terracotta and apricot or peach pink, and well-lit and airy with a central glass dome and rows of little spotlights. Here and there the tables are just too close together, and throughout lunch all those who passed had to pull in their stomachs between the corner

as many as I have seen anywhere but Langan's Brasserie, with calls not only received but initiated, which strikes me as a bit off. They'll be reading the paper next.

The class of music a restaurant forces on its customers must be some guide to the class of customers it hopes to attract. During dinner at Martin's we were subjected to Mozart's Clarinet Quintet followed by Bach's Second Brandenburg Concerto (the one with the trumpet). Now it just so happens that I am left faintly cold by the Mozart and find the Bach a clamorous, uncomfortably aggressive bit of work. But it would not be better, or marvellous, or all right if I loved them both dearly—it would, of course, be worse because a worse, more powerful distraction. A restaurant exists for the purposes of food, drink and conversation and it has no business to provide any-

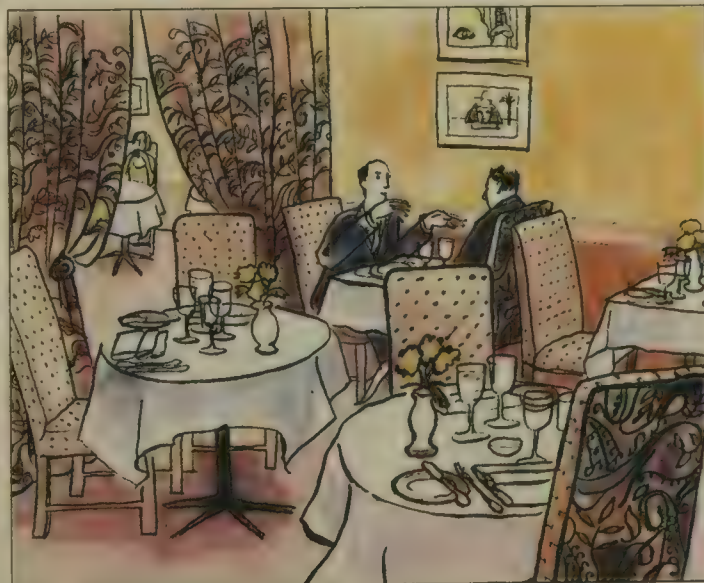
general style, though softer than some. And better still in its way, also from Australia: Penfold's (red) Koonunga Hill 1985 from the Shiraz and Cabernet grapes, as good as anything twice the price from France. (The same people's Grandfather Port is highly spoken of but I have yet to find it.)

The trend towards sweet dessert wines, the glass or the half-bottle between two to drink with the pudding course or the stronger cheeses, is fully maintained here. I had a second go at the unusual Essencia made from the Orange Muscat grape and found it as delicious as the first time, ready to challenge the more fashionable Muscat de Beaumes-de-Venise. Like the other wines, the Essencia was in the peak of condition and served efficiently and politely. In fact all the service here was good, and loud were the self-reproaches when a piece of cooking apparatus was discovered at the bottom of my mushroom tartlet. (It tasted all right.)

So, last and least, I am afraid, to the food, the weak point of so many otherwise agreeable restaurants, unfortunately rather a basic one to most people. The menu at Martin's is what I suppose one would have to call eclectic, not French in either old or new style, not noticeably English, etc. I have a bias towards plain food but in the last few years have had to learn tolerance. Very well: the warm duck salad—something had bits of duck that should have been left with the leftovers; the Martin's garden salad had too much limp, fork-resistant, lettuce-like vegetation; the medallions of pork with calvados sauce had poorish pork, good sauce; the liver and caramelised onions had passable liver, marvellous onions; the sorbets were fine; the plum tart was excellent. And so on.

Cooking in London is in an expansionist phase at the moment, new things being attempted and so, inevitably, mistakes being made. All very healthy in a way. But I wish they would get it right more often ●

Martin's, 239 Baker Street, London NW1 (935 3130). Mon-Fri midday-3pm, 6-11pm; Sat 7-11pm; Sun midday-2.30pm, 7-10pm. About £40 for two, excluding wine



LUCINDA ROGERS

of my table and the back of another fellow's chair, a quite disproportionate irritation.

The clientele on that summer (and, of course, saturated) day seemed either to have just come back from Spain or, more intelligently, to be just off there, perhaps for the second time, sporting sun-tans and light suits. The evening crowd were more sober and solid, popping across for a bit of supper as a fairly regular thing. But it has to be said that both sessions were infested with portable telephones,

thing else. How can we tell them?

The wine list at Martin's is really quite long for the size of place and very reasonably priced. One feature of it that similarly modest (non-three-figure) establishments would do well to copy is the short list of three ranges, £6.75, £9.75 and £12.75; small careful selections of unusual, attractive wines largely from the Antipodes and California. My guest and I enjoyed a Brown Brothers Chardonnay, from the great white burgundy grape of that name and in that



Why not?



Lanson



NO PROBLEM DESTINATION

Returning to Mauritius after 20 years, Jim Crace found more people, but the original laissez-faire atmosphere



Rempart mountains, tropical hues and shark-free waters



Exotic produce at Curepipe, but beware Curry Number Two



Once the site of escaped slaves' suicide leaps, Le Morne Brabant is the

My Mauritian T-shirt is printed with a dodo. Below the dodo's exaggerated feet, without a hint of ornithological irony, is the island's unofficial motto, *Pas de problème*. The Mauritius of the tourist brochures is "a no problem destination". Here is "the island of rainbows and shooting stars", here is "the star and key of the Indian Ocean", here is—or so the story goes—"God's earthly prototype for Paradise".

The island is "a no danger destination" too. There is a volcano, but it is deeper than the dodo on my T-shirt. There are snakes, but none with venom; mosquitoes, but no malaria. There are sharks, but they are rarely found within the cordon of coral which forms a reef around most of the island's 100 miles of white sand beaches. And if a stray hammerhead should find itself washed in among the wealthy bathers in the lagoon? "No problem. Mauritian sharks do not bite ... at least, not very hard."

The Mauritian sun, however, does bite hard. I spent a winter's afternoon, in June, sitting with the crabs and sparrows on the southerly beach at Le Morne Brabant, the "Bleak Rock", once a haven and later the site of suicide leaps for escaped plantation slaves. The surf was smoking on the reef. Next direct landfall to the south, beyond the sports boats angling for sail fish, marlin and barracuda, beyond the Tropic of Capricorn and 4,000 miles of ocean, was Kemp-Land, Antarctica. The only moving shadows came from hawkers on the beach, gently pressing cane dodos, "No problem" T-shirts and model boats on to frying Europeans.

By sunset I was radish red and with 80s paranoia I took no pleasure in my marinated skin. I had had enough of beach. I fled, sun-hatted and covered with cream, in search of the Mauritius I had first encountered in 1969 when I arrived by boat, *en route* for Madagascar. The independent



southernmost beach in Mauritius, also known as the Bleak Rock



Picnic at Pamplemousses, beside the giant lilies

Mauritius was less than one year old, and the island at that time was "sugar set in salt": its livelihood came from cane and fish. Its few tourists numbered 20,000 in that year (compared with 200,000-plus in 1987 and a projected 325,000 "elite" tourists by 1992). I spent 50 rupees (£2.30) for a day's car hire. I

slept on the beach. The only night life was a cabaret of lizards lit by the stars.

That was 1969. This time I hired an aging Mini, for an exorbitant £45 a day, and set out to discover Mauritius. Little had changed, despite all the tourists, despite dispiriting talk of creating a

"Singaporean-style" financial power, and despite the hasty holiday developments around Grand Baie where a little prostitution, too many diesel yachts and an over-loaded sewage system had pock-marked the land and poisoned the sea. This is, after all, an island practised in absorbing newcomers. Tiny Mauritius has roughly the same area and the same size population as Surrey (one million), but with so many newcomers and changes it is a patchwork nation.

The old man who harangued me about British football fans, and then treated me to tea, spoke of forbears from Bihar in northern India who arrived as indentured plantation workers in the 1850s. A fruit-and-veg trader in the extraordinary market at Port Louis boasted, across a stall loaded with sweet-sops, jack fruit, custard apples and chou-chou, that he was "true Creole". His family came as sugar slaves, brought by the French from Africa. A Chinese

woman, picking moodily through herbal remedies for thrush and haemorrhoids and "racing heart", had parents who fled Shanghai and the hordes of Mao in 1938. A "European", picnicking with his children by the giant water lilies of the Pamplemousses Gardens, had French forbears who left St Malo for Port Louis in 1720.

But for everyone the language is Creole, the "field French" which, for example, can render sunset as "*kan soleye pour alle boire di lo*" (when the sun drinks water). English, the official language of government and road signs (Beware of Overhead Irrigation), is hardly heard. The harmony of Mauritius is the harmony of a multi-racial nation speaking with one tongue. It helps, of course, that the island is so disarmingly attractive both in appearance and demeanour, with almost full employment, near total literacy and abundant food. (Though beware a menu offering Curry Number Two, which is Creole for monkey vindaloo.)



Harmony on the rocks

What they do not have is much local night-life, beyond the stage-managed "Creole Nights" in the hotels. At one of these I listened to a Mauritian band performing Paraguayan songs in Spanish to an audience of Italian honeymooners. There are no local bars. All the island's cherished ancient cars (mostly Morris Minors) are parked for the night by 10pm. Mauritius enjoys itself discreetly, with the family, and at home.

Hotel-jewellers, tired of beach, roulette and (in Mark Twain's phrase) the "Sunday landscape" of the coast, should take to the hills. At Anse Jonchée, for example, Alain O'Reilly, a French-speaking descendant of a British civil servant from Ulster, has built a

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hunting lodge in wood and straw in the foothills of the Bamboo Mountains. It is Crusoe's home-stead, plus mod cons, and has some of the finest, simplest Creole cooking in Mauritius. There's "millionaire's salad", the tender, pulpy heart of a young palm tree, followed by curried venison with coconut chutney.

There are 1,600 deer on Alain O'Reilly's domain, plus wild boar and macaque monkeys. I found myself included in a hunting party of Parisians. I placed myself, unarmed and afraid of bad shots, on one of the exposed wooden platforms towards which deer were being driven by beaters who were imitating barking dogs. The palm and eucalyptus woods were fretful with wild game. I concentrated on the distant sea beyond

there, as ugly and ill-planned as anything at Grand Baie.

But there was one pretty temple on a hill. I took my shoes off, Hindu-style, and climbed. The temple was for Hanuman, the monkey god. His shrine was laden with flowers and fruit. I recognised the chatter of real monkeys in the trees close by. They were macaques just like the ones that we had disturbed with gunshot at Anse Jon-chée. I stole the monkey god's bananas from his shrine and held them up, and quite soon the real monkeys came up and ate them.

I did not notice it get dark; tropical twilight is over in moments. I found my car all right, but could not find the route back to the coast. I ended up surrounded by sugar cane where the roughest track became the deepest



Few queues and no change problems at the locals' laundromat

Vieux Grand Port where the French and English fought their final battle for Mauritius in 1810 and where, at lowest tide, there are cannon balls and wrecks.

When the deer broke cover, five stately *paille-en-queue* (strawtail birds) took to the air. "See one, make a wish." I made five wishes, one for every Parisian present, but all to no avail. They shot five stags and frightened every macaque in the hills.

Next day I had the chance to make amends. I had been scrumping in the Black Rover Gorge and had picnicked free on bananas, sugar cane, tiny Chinese guavas, mandarins and those odd bush fruits which locals name as "plums" and "strawberries". You would never starve in Mauritius. Even the doves are plump and plentiful, and almost tame enough to pluck off the trees like pears. In late afternoon I reached the lake of Grand Bassin. The local Hindus treat it as a holy place, a Ganges far from home. They have built a number of breeze-block temples

ditch. I heard the twitching of lizards in the night and something in the distance which seemed like rain. Foolishly, I left my car. The overhead water cannon which irrigated the sugar sent a plume of water across the flowering cane and irrigated me. I didn't give a damn. If I was lost and wet, so what? By now I had the island's mantra on my lips, *Pas de problème, pas de problème, pas de problème...*

Jim Crace travelled with Air Mauritius and stayed at one of the island's more discreet and restful hotels, the *Meridien Paradis* at Le Morne. Also recommended are the *Royal Palm* at Grand Baie, a luxurious "white glove" establishment, and the *livelier La Pirogue* which has both cabaret and casino. A two-week package holiday costs around £1,300 for each person, half board. For further information contact the Mauritius Government Tourist Office, 49 Conduit Street, London W1R 9FB (437 7508).

Jim Crace's new novel, *The Gift of Stones*, is published by Secker & Warburg, £9.95.



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Travel notes

If you have only just started to address the question of escaping from the forced idleness of an English Christmas, all is not lost. Seat brokers can probably find you a return ticket; they often have special seat allocations on airlines, up-to-the-minute knowledge of extra flights, and powerful computers to grab a returned seat before the airline's own space control gets to know about it.

Trailfinders (01-938 3366) say that the Caribbean is the first to sell out, but they can usually find some seats to India and the Far East in October. Riaz Dooley's Travel Bazaar (01-221 1729) deals with the less popular airlines, so if you don't mind the vagaries of travelling with Aeroflot or Bangladesh Biman, they can get you to such a truly out-of-the-way place as Madagascar. For flights to Europe try Vivair (01-636 5466) and Pilgrim Air (01-748 1333).

Inevitably, accommodation is scarce too, but tourist offices can often be very helpful. They usually

have extensive lists of hotels, guesthouses and properties to rent, many of which are not used by the tour operators. Interhome (01-891 1294) has more than 17,000 European properties on its books, including a large number of chalets in ski resorts. For Kenya, Flamingo Tours of East Africa has a London office (01-439 7722) which can scout around for space in safari lodges, but do make sure to double-check their bookings by telexing yourself.

Among the best places to head for at Christmas are India and the Far East. The weather is superb and many areas don't celebrate Christmas, which leaves space for us in their resorts. I spent three weeks touring southern India last December and simply turned up at the best hotels—the Malabar in Cochin, the Lalithamahal Palace in Mysore and the Ritz in Hyderabad—all of which had rooms. Essential for this journey: the *Lonely Planet* guidebooks.

GILL CHARLTON

Morning sunlight filtered through the leaves of the stately old plane trees shading the courtyard, illuminating the white napery and polished silverware on the table. Breakfast was worthy of the setting. Superb coffee, home-made yoghurt and local honey, freshly-baked croissants and brioches, and a bowl of fresh fruits on crushed ice. It was

on the Turkish coast. It is a place to explore and savour, and the Villa Argentikon is part of the island's unique past and a wonderful base to absorb the atmosphere.

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And if the islands that blithely spoil themselves beyond repair ever want to know the reason for our vigilance, they'll find it standing knowingly in a little museum in Port Louis: the 300 year old skeleton of a dodo.

If you would like to know more about holidays in Mauritius you can contact us at the Mauritius Government Tourist Office, 49 Conduit Street, London W1R 9FB. Telephone: 01-437 7508. (24 hours.)





THE SPINK SCHOOL OF DANCE

Ian Spink has never had much faith in himself as a dancer. But as a choreographer with his own company he has stamped his mark. Julia Pascal went to rehearsals

Ian Spink is one of the most exciting choreographers currently based in Britain. His arrival as an important contemporary dance-maker is via the conventional world of classical ballet. Spink was born 40 years ago in Australia and danced with Australian Dance Theatre, the Australian Ballet and New South Wales Dance Company. There was no dance tradition in his background: his father worked in physics. "I always thought it esoteric work," says Spink, "but then I guess what I've been doing seems esoteric to some people."

He started dancing late, at 15, after watching a rehearsal of *The Nutcracker* and thought it was "great fun". His two sisters were already learning ballet and, as all the Spink children were being taught to play the piano, dance seemed a natural extension. But Spink the child dancer was, according to family legend, also a child choreographer. "It seems that I did a production of *Giselle*

when I was nine, with my two sisters dancing round pretending to be a full company. But when I think back I didn't spontaneously decide my career; it was all part of a process."

The process started with the Australian Ballet. "I had no sense of who I really was when I was part of the company. The dancer is a component of a group and there are no real boundaries between the group and you as an individual. I became unhappy in my early 20s: unhappy with classical ballet and unhappy at feeling 'lost' among the company." Classical ballet was disappointing because of its hierarchical structure. "It seemed that a bunch of people in this formidable pecking order were being wheeled around like puppets to do ancient productions." By the early 1970s Spink had seen very little contemporary work but was hearing about "this guy Merce Cunningham and John Cage" while Glen Tetley (the American dancer/choreographer) was arriving on the Australian scene.

It was while touring in 1972/73 that he experienced what was to become the New Dance explosion.

Watching without judging:
Spink allows his dancers free movement and expression

Overture

In London for the first time, Spink saw Tetley's *Pierrot Lunaire* danced by Ballet Rambert. It was the famous Peggy van Praagh, first director of the Australian Ballet (responsible for nurturing the talents of choreographers Kenneth MacMillan and John Cranko), who suggested Spink should see Rambert's work. "One piece was for three soloists dancing a sequence to no music in canon; I'd never seen anything like it."

Affected by New Dance here, Spink returned to Australia determined to win choreographic competitions. Instant success decided his career change and he speedily absorbed the New Dance vocabulary. Nederlands Dans Theater choreographer Jaap Flier encouraged Spink to create new works on Australian classically-trained dancers. Spink explored the major influence of Martha Graham only to develop a severe hatred for her methodology. "It's a difficult technique for men. The contractions which form the root of her style are more to do with the way a woman's body moves." Cunningham's technique proved more sympathetic. "As with classical ballet, Cunningham encourages the dancer to move across and above the floor, not down into it as with Graham."

For Spink it was an amazing struggle to make the transition from classical to contemporary. "I think of myself as a sort of failure as a dancer," he says. "Maybe I'm too hard on myself. But I felt I was never really good enough. I certainly have far more satisfaction conceiving an idea." Dissatisfied with Australian dance, Spink decided to make the major break to England 10 years ago.

His introduction to London's New Dance was at a Gulbenkian Choreographic Summer School. There he met Graham-method teacher (and founder of London Contemporary Dance Theatre) Bob Cohan. Spink admits he "rejected a lot of Cohan's dance aesthetic", it provoked him to believe that "I could do a lot better". On the same course he met Siobhan Davies who was to form the company Second Stride with him in 1983, and a collaboration with dancers Betsy Gregory and Michelle Smith offered the opportunity to work with contemporary-trained dancers. The huge leap from constricting classical technique to the freedom of contemporary dance was made for Spink at this moment. And, in those 10 years, he has moved into

an individual dance theatre which defies easy categorisation.

Spink loves to collaborate. He formed Second Stride with Richard Alston (now Artistic Director of the renamed Rambert Dance Company) and Davies. He has made pieces with playwright Caryl Churchill and he regularly works with lighting designer Peter Mumford and designer Antony McDonald. Choreographers and theatre directors usually divide into two types. Some have a strong idea before rehearsal begins and see the performers merely as instruments to fulfil this vision; others prefer to let their idea grow, inspired by a generous input from performers. The first method makes for a secure, if somewhat rigid process, in which the performer can feel imaginatively stifled; the more anarchic method allows a democratic structure which gives the performer greater satisfaction. Spink's style is a mutual exploration of a theme and it makes for a fascinating rehearsal process.

His new work, which has its première in Basildon this month and opens at London's Dance Umbrella, was rehearsed on stage in Basildon's Towngate Theatre. *Dancing and Shouting* probes "the connection between science fiction and contemporary politics". Spink and his company are exploring texts by Hitler, Ronald Reagan, Andrea Dworkin, the US science fiction author Joanna Russ and the

His dance
theatre is always
surprising.
It is always a
risk . . . and the
gamble pays off

writings of the Baader-Meinhof Group. During rehearsal Spink uses other forms of creative input as a stimulus.

One day recently the company had seen Pontecorvo's film *The Battle of Algiers* and Spink was exploring the dynamics of a body hit by explosion. Each dancer was to show a response to the Algerian bombing. Philippe Giraudeau leaps, curving his body in the force of the blast; then, one by one, each dancer has to wrestle with the problem of transferring the filmed explosion into a pure body movement. "Let me see," urges Spink, "and we can talk later."

Stephen Goff receives a blast in the back and crumples to the floor. Cathy Burge takes the blow in her chest and lands painfully on her back. Elizabeth Lauren covers her head from an explosion. Sally Owen ricochets her body across the floor. Giraudeau takes up the ricochet idea and develops it until his hands shake with the effort of remaining upright. Goff goes a step further and receives two blasts to his body, struggling in agony to keep standing. Giraudeau absorbs Goff's work and lifts him splay-legged across the stage, in order to soften his eventual fall. This is how Spink's method generates a cumulative process.

Spink watches without ever judging and, when the dancers are exhausted, he guides them towards analysis. "Was there anything else you noticed that would be interesting behaviour?" The company talk of the scene where a café is bombed. Someone remembers the stunned movement of a woman walking away from the explosion. Another talks about the emotional shock waves. Sally Owen speaks of the film's "mistake"; she breaks the word as if to illustrate broken, repetitive action.

The Company move into Stanislavsky-style emotional recall. Burge remembers a road accident. Owen recalls a body on the ground by a bus stop. Burge returns to the film. "You don't hear an explosion you feel it." Spink reminds the company that Pontecorvo used amateurs to reconstruct the bombing. Questions about reality and art are thrown on to the floor. But first the performers are encouraged to find the truth of their own experience. Burge notes, "during a crisis the feeling is as if the heart is bursting in the body, as if it will explode". Throughout this delicate process there are silences as each performer goes into private thought. After the imaginative exploration Spink urges "Let's see it again," and once more each dancer probes his or her memory to find a fresh bodily response to the pain of a bombing.

Meanwhile a young woman has silently slipped in to watch the action. It is Spink's latest composer, Evelyn Ficarra. Her composition is to be affected by this slow delving, and her silent presence on the rehearsal room floor is as crucial as the dancers'.

Whether *Dancing and Shouting* will contain the force of revolutionary protest is doubtful. Spink admits that he tends to soften his work, preferring ambiguity to direct statement. *Weighing*

the Heart, with the cult band Man Jumping, contained many biblical references, but no special theological knowledge was necessary to enjoy the performance. Spink deliberately used Man Jumping on stage as part of the action. Not quite dance and not quite theatre, the work was exactly what Spink wanted, "a sensual work with a collage of ideas, a mixture of improvisation and choreographic patterns". The relationship with Man Jumping arose from Spink's long-term collaboration with Orlando Gough. The Gough/Spink combination includes *Bösendorfer Waltzes*, *Further and Further into Night* and *New Tactics*. It stretches back five years and there is talk of future projects.

In 1989 Spink will return to the world of classical ballet though his approach is certainly not going to be reverential. For the bicentennial of the French Revolution on the South Bank, Spink will relate the making of the ballet *Coppelia* to the revolutionary action on the Paris streets. This is his next work after *Dancing and Shouting* and, beyond enjoying the three-year residency at Basildon's Towngate Theatre, he keeps all future projects under wraps.

In his first 10 years here, his track record has gathered wide praise and respect from classical and contemporary dance critics. He works easily across the media: most notable was his collaboration with playwright Caryl Churchill for Channel 4's *Dance Lines* on a work called *Fugue*. There, he showed that his dance is never dance for dance sake. The work presented the death of a father and the family's response. Here the only formal dance moment was the wife's flashback memory of waltzing with her new husband as she watches his coffin disappear behind the crematorium curtains. At the funeral party, young parents dance lovingly with their new babies. A man in a suit crawls on to the floor to find the comfort of the foetal position; a woman in 1950s dress returns to childhood by rolling on the floor and kicking in impotent rage.

Spink uses free movement, rather than conventional dance, to release emotional reactions. His dance theatre is always surprising. It is always a risk. There is always the chance that such an open method of work could backfire and result in chaos. But he trusts his instinct, his performers and his years of experience, and the gamble pays off ●

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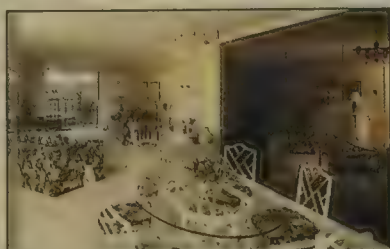


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BY THE BOOKER

Booker comes but once a year and when it comes it brings plenty of hype. **Patricia Miller** looks behind the scenes

The new literary prizes that have sprung up over the last few years simply do not compete with the Booker prize for fiction. It has become the ultimate accolade for artistic endeavour of any sort in Britain and not even such gaudy inventions as the Betty Trask Award for Romantic Fiction have lured away the attention. The Booker is *it*: the glory, the television coverage, the leap in sales and, of course, the £15,000 in prize money.

Nothing quite competes with the feverish campaigning of the publishers and literary agents that precedes the announcement of the winner at a banquet in mid October. Yet it is a subtle affair, a long way from the crassness of the film world, for instance.

Only a few publishers mount expensive publicity drives, with shelf displays and launch parties. These are often found to be counter-productive.

Nor does bribery seem to be a frequent tactic, although in my seven years of writing about publishing for a trade paper, a position far less influential than that of any Booker judge, I was twice offered bribes.

This year's Booker judges assure me that nothing remotely like a bribe has been offered to them. Sebastian Faulks, the novelist and literary editor of the *Independent* newspaper, is convinced that it would not work. The rest, too, chairman Michael Foot, novelist Rose Tremain, poet Blake Morrison and film critic Philip French, must be regarded as being as incorruptible as the General Synod of the Church of England.

Only once has a Booker judge exerted undue influence, and that was the result of force of personality rather than corruption. In 1972, well before the Booker had acquired its current status, George Steiner overruled the objections of Elizabeth Bowen and Cyril Connolly to name John Berger the winner for his experimental novel *G*. Following this débâcle, the number of judges was increased so that a single enthusiast could not push through his own idiosyncratic choice.

The tactic which is left to the



Grandes dames of literature: Molly Keane (*Loving and Giving*), Muriel Spark (*Far from Kensington*) and Isabel Colegate (*Deceits of Time*)

publisher or agent who wishes to promote a novel is the one the book world calls "logrolling". It may not be the most apt word since it is defined as the trading off of favours to secure mutual advantage. But it does suggest a concerted attempt to manipulate opinion. All concerned with the Booker acknowledge that a huge amount of subtle promotion goes on when authors, publishers, judges and journalists meet at parties, or exhibitions, or concerts—wherever London's literati congregate, as they do incessantly. These smart rumour-mongers come in many forms but the most frequent is the member of the publisher's PR department who whispers with awe that they have just put down the work of a genius. "My god if the judges don't give it to Marina [Warner] they ought to be shot." Interested parties do quite as much to steer opinion, while proclaiming that they are doing nothing of the kind.

The novelist Elizabeth Jane Howard is said to have carried this act off with great aplomb in the year she was a judge and her then husband, Kingsley Amis, was being considered. She announced that she intended to leave the room while his novel was discussed. Of course, she let it be known that the novel happened to be his best ever, but far be it from her, she said, to stay and point out its merits.

Last year I was told by a novelist friend who had not been nominated for the prize by her publisher that she had phoned one of the judges and asked him to call her novel in to the competition. She saw her initiative as a simple act of professionalism. Her boldness did her little good. It was the year that

P.D. James and her fellow judges refused to call in any additional books. This proved embarrassing to some publishers who had strategically held back a few of their most distinguished novelists, nominating their second string in the belief that the judges would feel bound to call in the star names.

It was an understandable rebellion by the judges at the number of books they have to read. This year's total is 103, although Rose Tremain complains that when they signed on they were promised they would have to read only 70 or so for their £2,000 fee. Each publisher submitted three books, and descriptions of five more that the judges might want to call in. They finally settled on a further 10 titles. These were novels by Gilbert Adair, Beryl Bainbridge, Clare Boylan, Alan Brien, Hilary Mantel, Anita Mason, Candia McWilliams, Stephen Spender, E.P. Thompson and Barry Unsworth. Adair's and McWilliams's books are both first novels, so even if they do not go further, the authors may still be satisfied.

On August 26 the judges met in Michael Foot's room at the House of Commons to produce a list of 29 which will probably grow to 35 or so as they reread one another's choices. This list contains books by four previous winners of the prize. They are: Kingsley Amis, *Difficulties With Girls* (Hutchinson), Anita Brookner, *Latecomers* (Cape), Penelope Fitzgerald, *Beginning of Spring* (Collins) and Salman Rushdie, *Satanic Verses* (Viking). It also includes Peter Carey's *Oscar and Lucinda* (Faber) which looks favourite at this point,

and *Lost Father* (Chatto) by Marina Warner, who would be the most glamorous winner, the one the media would love.

The judges meet next on September 26 in the gloriously bookish setting of the north library of the Athenicum Club to pick a short list of six. Just before the dinner at the Guildhall on October 25, they will meet in the Booker boardroom to make their final selection. At the dinner, televised this year by BBC2, a certain amount of sadistic fun will be had by the few daily newspaper journalists who have been told the winner's name early so they can meet their deadlines. Or even by people who have not. One year, Chatto publisher Carmen Callil told Tony Lacey of Viking that his author Robertson Davies had won. When Davies did not win, Callil laughed and told Lacey: "At least I made you happy for a couple of hours."

One early rumour this year is that the short list will be made up of women who are drawing or are about to draw their pensions. They are Brookner and Fitzgerald, former winners, plus Molly Keane, *Loving and Giving* (Deutsch), which brought tears to the eyes of one judge, Doris Lessing *The Fifth Child* (Cape), Muriel Spark *Far from Kensington* (Constable) and Isabel Colegate *Deceits of Time* (Hamish Hamilton).

Meanwhile the judges are having too sedate a time of it. Perhaps real 80s authors and their supporters will take to heart the words of the late Truman Capote: "Nothing ever happens to novels unless you make it happen. I made *Other Voices, Other Rooms* a success. I made my career possible myself. I made myself talked about, and my book talked about. Do you think Random House made my success? Don't be ridiculous. I did it. I got the publicity and I arranged the reviews and I promoted the book myself and everything. If you don't want your novel to drop like a pebble in the ocean and be instantly forgotten you have to make its success happen."

Michael Foot's number at the House of Commons is 219 3000.

GOOD YAWNING VIETNAM

By Nicholas Shakespeare

Smoking opium in Vietnam, to the sound of helicopters overhead, Graham Greene wrote "the nearer you are to war, the less you know what is happening". Vietnam is a scab Hollywood cannot stop picking at in order to understand what happened to America in the 60s and 70s. After the Conradian soul-searching of *Apocalypse Now*, we arrive in *Good Morning Vietnam* at the 'Allo, 'Allo school of scrutiny.

Saigon, 1965. Adrian Cronauer, an off-beat disc jockey, flies in to cheer up troops woozy on the music of Percy Faith and Andy Williams. He plays rock music, loud, and impersonates various celebrities, sometimes amusingly. He proves very popular with the men and very unpopular with his superiors, the bloodless Lieutenant Hawk and Sergeant-Major Dickerson, a man with a barbed-wire smile and a nice line in repartee: "Your ass is grass and I'm a lawnmower."

Out of the recording studio, where most of the action takes place, Cronauer befriends a Vietnamese girl and her brother. He teaches them colloquial English—"You sound like you learned English from Tonto"—defends them against GI thugs and falls in soupy love with the girl. Midway, a bomb explosion reminds us we are in war-time Vietnam, not peaceful Bangkok (where *Good Morning Vietnam* is filmed and to which it bears too great a resemblance). When Cronauer tries to broadcast news of what is taking place, he is suspended by Lieutenant Hawk, reinstated, then removed for ever because it is discovered his great friends happen to be as thick as thieves with the Viet-Cong.

Good Morning Vietnam begins as a good, modest idea and is spoilt by the pathological need to transform it into something universal and sentimental. War is quick and grim, unfocused and badly framed, but Barry Levinson's direction suggests a glossy trailer for a holiday in the paddy-fields. While Robin Williams gives a versatile performance as the disc jockey, he also transmits the sense that it would be exhausting to be stuck in a room with him. Nor is Mitch Markowitz's script—a



Exhausting: Robin Williams as the disc jockey, Adrian Cronauer

soi-disant attempt to investigate the nature of humour—particularly rib-tickling, relying as it does on our having to laugh at unfunny people who think they are funny.

Five Corners—Handmade's "first American movie"—takes place in America at roughly the same time. It stars Jodie Foster, a BA from Yale University, and a woman for whom men threaten to shoot presidents. "I took this film because it had a great script," she trills of John Patrick Stanley's pretentious screenplay, which attempts to combine street-wise humour with dollops of horror in the manner of that grotesque waste of celluloid, *Blue Velvet*.

A young man, Heinz, is released from prison. He slouches back into his Bronx neighbourhood, his manic eyes looking for the

highly-strung, foxy-faced Linda, who sells goldfish in her father's pet shop. She does not like Heinz, and seeks protection from Harry, a tall friend who lives with his mother and who owns a St Bernard called Buddha. Harry (well

A glossy trailer for a holiday in the paddy-fields

played by Tim Robbins) is regarded by many as being "out to lunch" because of his involvement in the civil rights movement. Actually, he is as sensitive as his dog's nose. When Heinz kidnaps

Linda, having beaten a penguin to death, Buddha tracks him down in a matter of shaggy bounds.

Produced and directed by Tony Bell, *Five Corners* is unable to explore the implications of what it sets up. It is all very well to strum the chords of *Beauty and the Beast*, but not if you do not make the beast (John Turturro) a tiny bit sympathetic. The extent to which *Five Corners* condones gratuitous violence reaches a climax when Heinz gathers up his mother—a woman out to every meal of the day—and throws her out of the window. For some reason, it was the funniest scene in the film.

Finally, *Bagdad Café*, an enchanting road-side movie directed by Percy Adlon who brought us *Sugar Baby* and with it that endearing hulk, Marianne Sägebrecht. We witness an argument in the desert near Las Vegas. A husband dumps his large German wife by the highway. Jasmin stands a moment in the long shadows and red sand, the lorries passing. Then, wearing full Bavarian rig, she walks into a motel/petrol-station. The place is run by Brenda (C. C. H. Pounder), a shrill negress whose own husband has stomped off. It teems with weird flotsam—a Hollywood set-painter (Jack Palance), a boomerang thrower, a silent lady reading *Death In Venice*.

Gradually, Jasmin lets her hair down. She is painted naked by the Hollywood artist, she throws boomerangs (suggesting she—and Brenda's husband—will return), she entertains nomadic truck-drivers with little magic tricks and Bavarian cabaret.

The film has its pretentious moments. Some of Adlon's angles are a little too angular, some of his flashbacks a little too flashy. Here and there, perhaps deliberately, he misses a beat. But as Jasmin unfolds like one of her magic flowers, a rhythm builds up. Ultimately it is Marianne Sägebrecht who steals the show. Her Russian-doll face peels away to reveal layers of fragility, toughness, gregariousness, loneliness. Sensibly, the dialogue is almost non-existent.

Nicholas Shakespeare is Literary Editor of The Daily Telegraph. See listings for cinema details.

SAATCHI'S FOUR OF A KIND

By James Hall

Charles Saatchi, aided by his wife Doris, is one of the world's most prolific collectors of contemporary art. Having bought his first work in 1969 at the age of 26, he now holds more than 800 works by about 70 artists, and has an annual budget estimated at over \$2 million. Though his collection is composed mainly of American art from the 60s onwards, and recent German and Italian New Image painting, his current interest is British art—principally Auerbach, Kitaj, Kossoff, Hodgkin, Morley, Deacon, Willing and Rego. Since 1985 the collection has been systematically shown in the frigid, all-white splendour of the Saatchi's vast St John's Wood gallery, and loaned to exhibitions worldwide. No one knows what will happen to the collection eventually; there is plenty of speculation and rumour, fuelled by Saatchi's determination to be neither seen nor heard.

Many of Saatchi's critics believe that his art appreciation is tainted by the Original Sin of being an ad-man. Peter Fuller, whose magazine *Modern Painters* is fanatically anti-Saatchi, limbers up by reminding me of Saatchi's occupation, then really gets into his stride: "His influence on the British art world is entirely negative. He can't tell a good painting from a bad one. It's all about prestige and style." Fuller manages a sprint finish: "By and large the collection is trash."

Saatchi, who sometimes buys up entire shows, inevitably has a great effect on the art stock-market, and on taste in general. As soon as the Saatchis start buying, naive collectors follow their lead. And when they start selling, as happened with the Italian artist Sandro Chia, reputations and prices collapse. Nevertheless, even Fuller admits he is not in it for the money, and this kind of dumping is not unusual among major collectors.

Doubts have been expressed about Saatchi's influence on art institutions—the Tate and White-chapel have been criticised for exhibiting so many Saatchi works and, what is more, S & S handles the Tate's advertising and have been involved with the White-chapel in the past. Yet this level



Apocalypse looms over idle youth in Eric Fischl's *The Old Man's Boat and The Old Man's Dog* at the Saatchi Collection this month

of influence says much about the fragility of the British contemporary art world. First, Saatchi is unrivalled in Britain as a collector. Our collectors, unlike the Americans, are notoriously necrophiliac: an artist normally has to be dead and buried before the British buy. In the field of British contemporary art, Saatchi is a big fish in a shallow pool. Second, an under-funded institution like the Tate finds it increasingly difficult to take the risk of buying artists who could be here today, trash tomorrow. Saatchi can afford to take those risks, and does. His recent binge on "Neo-Geo" art is a case in point.

Compared with Saatchi, the Tate's own collection is feeble; it owns only seven works by Warhol, four by Anselm Kiefer (believed by many to be the greatest contemporary artist), and one by Schnabel (one of the most influential). Saatchi, on the other hand, holds 18 Warhols, at least 24 Kiefers and about 30 Schnabels. Like the work or not, London is now better informed about contemporary art than almost anywhere outside New York.

The latest exhibition of four Americans—Jennifer Bartlett, Eric

Fischl, Elizabeth Murray and Susan Rothenberg—is the most accessible show so far. The works are bold and deceptively simple. Each of the artists is an acclaimed figure of the 80s.

Eric Fischl is the most controversial, and, along with Freud, one of the greatest living Realist painters. His 1985 retrospective at the Institute of Contemporary

An artist
normally has to
be dead and
buried before the
British buy

Arts was picketed by feminists objecting to his depictions of naked, vulnerable women. One of Fischl's best-known works, *Bad Boy*, shows a naked older woman lying in a bed, while a boy (all the while staring at her) rummages in her handbag that lies open on the table: sexual awakening brings moral degeneration? The apparent

banality of Fischl's private lives is what makes them so disturbing. In another work a group of naked young people and a dog lounge on a drifting motor boat, oblivious to a huge wave careering towards them. Apocalypse now and then? Fischl sends his insistent message in a broken bottle.

Susan Rothenberg is best known for paintings in which the outline of a horse is superimposed on two adjacent squares of contrasting colour. More recently she has begun to introduce figurative images that reverberate as though seen through water. A typical Jennifer Bartlett consists of a painting of an idyllic beach by a clear, blue sea, deserted but for two empty yellow and black boats. On the floor, in front of the picture, are laid "real" yellow and black boats. Both artists are interested in refined visual games. Because certain colours tend to advance or retreat, the back and front of Rothenberg's horse never quite meet, and so the essentially flat, motionless animal seems to be dislocated into life. In Bartlett's work one's eye rocks back and forth from the "painted" to the "real" boat with a rhythm as endless as the tide. Her message is also in a bottle, though its drift seems somewhat aimless.

Bartlett is Californian; Fischl trained there. In many ways their imagery draws on that of British ex-pat David Hockney, whose retrospective opens at the Tate later this month. Fischl's early paintings of people in a shower, *Bathroom*, and the poolside *The Brat II*, are where Hockney meets Hitchcock, where daydream becomes nightmare. Even Elizabeth Murray's paintings, with their bulbous, brightly coloured shapes (often protruding from the wall like sculptural forms), resemble Hockney's recent prints. *Cracked Question* is a huge question mark that has been divided into discreet, biomorphic blobs. The symbol of a single-minded, interrogating intellect is reduced to a bunch of "pre-intellectual" embryos.

This raises one last question about the Saatchi collection: does this mean that Hockney will soon have a place in their pantheon of British artists? ●

See listings for exhibition details.

ALL THE MAGIC OF THE MUPPETS

The Satanic Verses
by Salman Rushdie
Viking, £12.95

A character in *The Satanic Verses* says "Columbus was right, maybe, the world's made up of Indies, East, West, North." Salman Rushdie's latest novel takes this rudimentary geographical notion, of a global, all-swallowing India, and carries it into the realms of psychology and poetry. His characters may travel as far as the fabled city of Ellowen Deowen (our city, transformed by orthographic incantation: "l", "o", "n", "d", "o", "n"); but they arrive to find only a perplexing outpost of home.

In India, the narrator assures us, "the human population outnumbers the divine by less than three to one". The work of Gibreel Farishta, one of the story's two leading characters, is to impersonate the divine population for the delectation of the human: he is a film actor, a star of the "Bombay talkies". Specialising in "theologicals", Gibreel makes half a dozen feature films a week, playing innumerable deities and demons.

The other main character, Saladin Chamcha, is also an actor. Ardent anglophile and naturalised Brit, his bread and butter is voice-overs for advertisements. Superbly qualified for this task by the protective mimicry which has facilitated his assimilation into the English establishment, Saladin can speak in any register, any accent. Recently he has begun to enjoy greater success, as the star of a children's TV programme which sounds like a cross between *The Muppet Show* and *Max Headroom*. Caked in make-up and aided by state-of-the-art graphics, he plays the part of a comic alien.

Rushdie translates these two genres into literary terms. *The Satanic Verses* has all the characteristics of a hack Indian film: it is done in garishly artificial colour and with an insistently blaring soundtrack; it has a grotesquely implausible plot, energetically wooden performances and a frantically coy approach to sex. From time to time, though, the novelist gives us a nudge to show that he is, in the approved post-



REX FEATURES

Rushdie: a flatness that will reduce rivals to gasping admiration.

modern fashion, aware of the awfulness of his production—he invites us to share the joke.

This literary knowingness—"it was and it was not so"; "it happened and it never did"—turns the naive into the *faux naïf* and raises the "tawdry shamming" of a low-budget film to the Parnassian heights of *The Muppet Show*. The author has, however, made a notable contribution to "magic realism", the sophisticated school of fiction pioneered by Emma Tennant, Fay Weldon and Angela Carter.

For those unfamiliar with the aesthetic tenets of this school, Rushdie obligingly has one of his characters offer an unusually frank explanation: "I am an intelligent female. I have read *Finnegans Wake* and am conversant with post-modernist critiques of the West, e.g. that we have here a society capable only of pastiche: a

'flattened' world... I am entering Flatland knowingly, understanding what I'm doing and why. Viz, I am earning cash."

The adventures of Gibreel and Saladin in Flatland begin when they are on their way from India to England. Their plane is hijacked by Islamic fanatics, who blow it up over the Channel. But as G and S are plummeting to their deaths a miracle occurs: they suddenly acquire the power of flight. By the time they land in Blighty their corporeal forms have changed dramatically: Gibreel has acquired a halo, Saladin has grown horns and cloven feet.

The progress of these newly created beings, the angel and the demon, is interspersed, and paralleled, by episodes set in Arabia at the time of Mohammed and in present-day rural India. The Arabian scenes offer a mildly amusing spoof on the early history of Islam,

featuring the Prophet as a businessman, doing deals with rival prophets, building a military empire and inventing a farcically detailed social code. The Indian scenes give an account of life in the archetypal village of Titlipur, which is dominated physically by a vast banyan tree, spiritually by the legacy of a false prophet.

Rural India and post-Biblical Arabia serve as historic relief to the main story—the antics of G and S in London. When describing the city Rushdie achieves a standard of flatness which will reduce his rival magical realists to gasping admiration. The reader is arrested by such gems as "the cathedrals of the Industrial Revolution", and waits impatiently for the comparison to be made explicit: "the railway termini of north London"! Ah, the shock of the old!

The same admirable consistency is to be found in the jokes that litter this novel like so many elephant droppings.

For example, Saladin has a lawyer, an accountant and an agent: they are called, respectively, Bentine, Milligan and Sellers. Nor does Rushdie disappoint the young thinkers who sit with him near the feet of Lady Antonia Pinter. How's this for hard-hitting socialist "pastiche"? "... "She's radical all right. What she wants—what she actually thinks she can fucking achieve—is literally to invent a whole goddamn new middle class in this country. Get rid of the old woolly incompetent buggers from fucking Surrey and Hampshire, and bring in the new. People without background, without history. Hungry people. People who really want, and who know that with her, they can bloody well get. Nobody's ever tried to replace a whole fucking class before, and the amazing thing is she might just do it if they don't get her first."

The trouble is that those cunningly posited alternatives—"it was and it was not so"; "it happened and it never did"—do not in fact arise. The reader has not one moment of doubt; it was not so; it never happened. If only it had never been written... ●

—LEWIS JONES

Books

NON-FICTION

Bernard Shaw Vol 1: The Search for Love

by Michael Holroyd
Chatto & Windus, £16

Bernard Shaw did not intend to make life easy for his biographers. There is no shortage of material, for he never stopped writing (except to talk) but he did not mind mincing words, flavouring them, like some master chef, with subtle sauces so that their original ingredients were hard to identify. He deftly rearranged some of the facts of his early life in Dublin, where he spent what he later described to Ellen Terry as "a devil of a childhood, rich only in dreams, frightful and loveless in realities", and, when he had escaped to London, began the manufacture of a new identity—not Sonny, as he was called as a boy, but GBS, the socialist intellectual, critic, journalist, playwright, wit and, as he liked to describe himself, "messenger boy of the new age".

This volume covers the years 1856 to 1898: from birth to marriage. Michael Holroyd tackles them like an archaeologist, digging beneath surface appearances, sifting through the verbiage, carefully weighing the Shavian accounts with what other evidence is available, always conscious of the literary conjuring tricks his subject liked to perform. Shaw's path, Holroyd notes, was paved with facts, but there were others that had misleadingly tumbled elsewhere and which he ignored. "As a polemicist he is marvellously convincing, but since he is fleeing from uncertainties his writings are studded with many brilliant evasions, and eventually, as doubt was beaten back, something human in Shaw diminished."

Shaw had neither the time nor the inclination to concern himself too much about that. Already a teetotaler, vegetarian and non-smoker, the rest of the business of creating GBS and of making a success of something—anything—was proving uphill work. He had abandoned clerking and turned to writing, but his novels were rejected by publishers, the last, *An Unsocial Socialist*, on the grounds that it suffered from "the fatal effect on a novel of not being interesting".

He decided to give up book writing and make socialism his main business. He studied *Das*

Kapital, and described it later as the turning-point of his career. It was, he said, "the only book that ever turned me upside down"—a position which (Max Beerbohm was to suggest) he maintained for the rest of his life. He joined the Fabian Society, wrote pamphlets for them and conquered his shyness to become a popular, though always controversial, public speaker.

As a journalist his career began with his music criticism, for which he chose the absurd and quite inappropriate pseudonym of Corno di Bassetto, an instrument of the woodwind family used by Mozart for its melancholy quality. Shaw's writing on music, as Holroyd suggests, was designed to drive out melancholy, just as music itself had done in Sonny's Dublin house, and just as his later drama criticism in the *Saturday Review* was intended to achieve for the theatre.

Playwriting, for which Shaw is now best remembered, came more slowly and painfully. Indeed it was not until the American triumph of his seventh play, *The Devil's Disciple*, that it could be said with any conviction that Shaw had established a career for himself. He was then 42, and the year was 1898, a much more significant turning-point than the reading of Karl Marx, for it meant that for the first time he earned a substantial amount of money. He also embarked on the "terrible adventure" by marrying Charlotte Payne-Townshend.

He did so with great reluctance, though from the evidence of this volume it should have been Charlotte who hesitated. As always with Shaw, there is paradox. He campaigned for the rights of women but treated them badly. He persuaded himself that women inevitably fell in love with him, he flirted and wrote many wonderful love letters, but generally did not mean women to take him seriously. Those women that did, suffered for it because he then ran for cover. Holroyd identifies three categories of relationship in Shaw's life: flirtations with single women (often young Fabian girls), philandering with the wives of friends (usually socialist colleagues), and consummated love affairs with a divorced or separated lady. Certainly in this early part of his life he was too self-centred for love. His friend Beatrice Webb was frank: "as a friend and colleague, as a critic and literary worker, there are few men for whom I have so warm a liking—but in his relations with women he is

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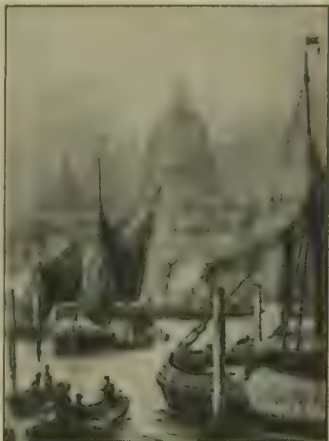
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vulgar—if not worse—it is a vulgarity which includes cruelty and springs from vanity”.

Something human had certainly diminished in Shaw by the age of 42, when he was, in his own words, “a fearful wreck”, and when he needed, in the words of Holroyd, “something to save his life”. The years described in this volume were a struggle, but perhaps they need not have been quite such a struggle as Shaw made them and as this densely-woven biography meticulously records.

—JAMES BISHOP

Geoffrey Howe, A Quiet

Revolutionary

by Judy Hillman and Peter Clarke,

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £12.95

Who would succeed Margaret Thatcher tomorrow if she were to be run over by the proverbial bus? The question posed a year or so ago to a Tory grandee had a simple answer: “The bus would not dare.” But there are people who would. The Brighton bomb was a fearful reminder of what evil fanatics can do. No one at the top can be regarded as immune from murder. If such a tragedy did occur, or if for other reasons the Prime Minister’s tenure ended, her most likely successor would be Sir Geoffrey Howe. He has held the two most important Cabinet posts and has done so with much success. He is generally liked. His views are unimpeachably Thatcherite even if his style is rather different from hers. He is ambitious, and why not? But he has never been pushy.

This pleasant and well-written biography is polite, thoughtful and friendly. No biography of a living person can be very illuminating, however respectable the background and character of its subject. This one is as good as you can get in that genre. It is particularly interesting about its subject’s early life as the son of a prosperous solicitor in Port Talbot.

Geoffrey Howe was educated at Winchester and at that great legal seminary, Trinity Hall, Cambridge. A right-wing Welsh Wykehamist is an unusual phenomenon. Wales has produced only one Prime Minister, Lloyd George, who was anything but conservative. Winchester, on the whole, contributes to the professions: bishops, judges, civil servants and academics. Apart from Lord Whitelaw, its few political figures in modern times have been on the left, Stafford Cripps, Gaitskill, Crossman. Winchester has pro-

duced only one prime minister, Henry Addington, who was Pitt the Younger’s predecessor. He was pompous, absurd and an object of ridicule. If Sir Geoffrey does become the second Welshman and the second Wykehamist to enter 10 Downing Street, he will be very different from his predecessors.

The authors discuss in some detail his role in the Heath administration. The years 1970-74 were a turning point in the history of the post-war Conservative Party. They began with promises and high hopes of a real departure from the interventionist consensus of the Macmillan era but ended in U-turns, confusion and electoral defeat. Geoffrey Howe won a seat in 1964, lost it in 1966, and got back in 1970 when he was appointed Solicitor General and soon afterwards Minister for Trade and Consumer Affairs.

In that capacity he was fully committed to the policy of controlling prices, incomes, rents and dividends, adopted by the Government from 1972 onwards. He was an out and out Heathite. So, of course, were other ministers at the time. There were no protests from Margaret Thatcher and Keith Joseph, and neither of them showed much sign of wishing to roll back the frontiers of the state when they headed respectively the DES and DHSS. But they and some, though by no means all, of Heath’s cabinet learnt from experience that controls were useless in checking inflation and concluded that, if restriction did not work, perhaps freedom might be worth trying.

Geoffrey Howe was a convert to the “enterprise culture”. His first budget set a course which has been followed ever since: reduction of taxes on personal income including the top rates, compensation by raising VAT, cutting of state subventions, and, perhaps most important of all, the abolition of exchange controls. This is the most revolutionary change of fiscal policy since 1945, and it was done so quietly as to be scarcely noticed. It has resulted in a huge accumulation of foreign assets and it has made the election of Labour in its old form virtually impossible.

Sir Geoffrey has been an unobtrusively efficient Chancellor with clear views and determined will. He has been a highly competent Foreign Secretary. If an unusually bold bus were to come along Geoffrey Howe would be a cool, calm and collected Prime Minister rather in the mould of Campbell-Bannerman, Bonar Law or Attlee. —ROBERT BLAKE



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THEATRE

Where applicable, a special telephone number is given for credit card bookings. The address & telephone number of each theatre are given only on the first occasion it appears in each section.

The Admirable Crichton. Impeccable servant proves to be most resourceful when he & his aristocratic employers are shipwrecked on an island. Major revival of the J. M. Barrie classic, starring Edward Fox & Rex Harrison. Haymarket, SW1 (930 9832, cc).

The Bite of the Night. Première production of Howard Barker's epic tale of how Dr Savage (Nigel Terry), a classics teacher at a defunct university, absconds with a student (David O'Hara) on a surreal journey to the 11 Troys of antiquity, meeting Homer & Helen. Danny Boyle directs. The Pit, Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, cc).

The Changeling. Expensive-looking production of 17th-century tragedy dealing with sexual obsessions. Richard Eyre directs Miranda Richardson & George Harris (both excellent). Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (928 2252, cc). REVIEWED AUG, 1988.

Dry Rot. Popular farce returns with Brian Rix making a comeback after 12 years to take in the starring role. Lyric, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (437 3686, cc).

The Father. First major London revival of Strindberg's drama since 1964. Directed by David Leveaux & starring Anton Rodgers. Cottesloe, National.

Hyde Park. by the 17th-century dramatist James Shirley, is updated to the 20s. The Woolf-like Fiona Shaw illuminates a Bloomsbury set which, apart from a monkey, is peopled with pop-up-book characters. As Pepys wrote, "a very moderate play". The Pit, Barbican.

Measure for Measure. High-octane performances from Roger Allam, Josette Simon & Sean Baker in

Nicholas Hytner's highly-praised production. Barbican.

Mrs Klein. Melanie Klein (1882-1960) had one abiding passion: to bring psychoanalysis to childhood. Nicholas Wright's play examines how her battle to increase the world's store of happiness very nearly destroyed her own. Peter Gill directs; Gillian Barge plays Mrs Klein. Cottesloe, National.

Re: Joyee! The life story of Joyce Grenfell. Maureen Lipman, who stars, co-wrote the script with James Roose Evans. Alan Strachan directs. Fortune, Russell St, WC2 (836 2238, cc).

The Sneeze. Collection of humorous one-act plays & short stories by Chekhov, newly translated & adapted by Michael Frayn. Ronald Eyre directs an impressive cast including Timothy West & Rowan Atkinson. Aldwych, WC2 (836 6404, cc).

Stop! In the Name of Love! The Fabulous Singlettes (& their gravity-defying hairstyles) star in an all-singing, all-dancing tribute to the girl groups who ruled the charts between Elvis & The Beatles. Piccadilly, Denman St, W1 (867 1118, cc 867 1111).

Sugar Babies. Broadway musical smash comes to London, starring Mickey Rooney & Ann Miller. A lighthearted but spectacular celebration of the great days of American burlesque, directed & choreographed by Ernest O'Flatt. Savoy, The Strand, WC2 (836 8888, cc).

Three Sisters. Major production of Chekhov's masterpiece, directed by John Barton. In a provincial town Irina (Stella Gonet), Olga (Deborah Findlay) & Masha (an excellent performance by Harriet Walter) yearn for the bright lights of Moscow. Uneven & slow in places. Barbican.

Uncle Vanya. Chekhov at its best. A distinguished cast includes Michael Gambon, Imelda Staunton & Greta Scacchi. Not to be missed. Vaudeville, Strand, WC2 (836 9987, cc). REVIEWED JULY, 1988.

FIRST NIGHTS

Bartholomew Fair. Richard Eyre directs Ben Jonson's classic tale. Opens Oct 20. Olivier, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (928 2252, cc).

Brigadoon. Big-budget revival of the hit musical, not seen for nearly 40 years. Two young American tourists stumble upon an enchanting Scottish town that reawakens one day in every 100 years. Stars Jacinta Mulcahy (fresh from *Les Misérables*), Robert Meadmore & Lesley Mackie. Opens Oct 25. Victoria Palace, Victoria St, SW1 (834 1317, cc).

Can-Can. Cole Porter's high-kicking musical, set among the Parisian *demi-monde* of the 1890s, stars the "queen of Broadway" Donna McKechnie. Also with Milo O'Shea & Bernard Alane. Opens Oct 14. Strand, Aldwych, WC2 (836 2660, cc).

Divine Gossip. Stephen Lowe's musical comedy celebrates the highs of low life in the Paris of 1929—"a town made for & by the imagination of expatriate artists". It features the experiences of various literary illuminati, among them Eric Blair (later George Orwell). Barry Kyle directs. Opens Oct 12. The Pit, Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, cc).

Ring Round the Moon. Confusion reigns as identical twin brothers arrive at a society ball. Christopher Fry's adaptation of Jean Anouilh's comedy-of-errors boasts a star-studded cast, including Googie Withers, June Whitfield & Jose Ferrer. Oct 10-15. Ashcroft, Fairfield Halls, Croydon (688 9291, cc).

Roots. Simon Curtis directs Arnold Wesker's seminal drama of a woman who learns to speak her mind. Written in 1959, its "kitchen sink" naturalism was to be much imitated. A touring production presented by National Theatre Education. Oct 19-21, 22 (m&e). Cottesloe, National.

The Secret Rapture. David Hare's fifth

play for the National concentrates on the differing ways two sisters choose to come to terms with the death of their father. Howard Davies directs, with designs by John Gunter. Opens Oct 4. Lyttelton, National.

The Tempest. Jonathan Miller's new staging of Shakespeare's last play, with Max von Sydow & Alexei Sayle. Opens Oct 7. Old Vic, Waterloo Rd, SE1 (928 7616, cc 261 1821).

STAYERS

Beyond Reasonable Doubt. Queens (734 1166); **Cats.** New London (405 0072); **Chess.** Prince Edward (734 8951); **Follies.** Shaftesbury (379 5399); **42nd Street.** Drury Lane (836 8108); **Les Liaisons Dangereuses.** Ambassador's (836 6111); **Me & My Girl.** Adelphi (836 7611); **Les Misérables.** Palace (434 0909); **The Mousetrap.** St Martin's (836 1443); **The Phantom of the Opera.** Her Majesty's (839 2244); **Run For Your Wife.** Criterion (867 1117); **Starlight Express.** Apollo Victoria (828 8665).

FRINGE

Consequences. Fascinating project in which eight playwrights, among them Howard Brenton & Trevor Griffiths, each write a scene depicting the future, in the manner of a game of consequences. The perfect sequel to Brenton's season of Utopian plays. Opens Oct 17. Royal Court Upstairs, Sloane Sq, SW1 (730 2554, cc 836 2428).

The Golden Age. The Lyric's "Oz 88" tribute to Australian theatre continues with Louis Nowra's true story of two hitch-hikers in Tasmania who discover "a lost tribe". Opens Oct 6. Lyric, King St, W6 (741 2311, cc).

Hedda Gabler. Lindsay Duncan tackles the lead role in Trevor Nunn's version of the Ibsen classic. Opens Oct 5.

Not to be missed . . . Lautrec's graphics at the Royal Academy;
Berlin Philharmonic at the Festival Hall; Second Stride dancing at The Place
Stay clear of . . . Jodie Foster in *Five Corners* and Bette Midler in
Big Business; Bobby Vee and the chirplless Crickets



Blues in the Bronx: Jodie Foster, disappointing star of *Five Corners*



Jacinta Mulcahy and Lesley Mackie in *Brigadoon* at the Victoria Palace

Hampstead Theatre, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3 (722 9224).

The Jungle. Buster Theatre bring Stevie Smith's poetry alive. Opens Oct 24. Latchmere, 503 Battersea Park Rd, SW11 (228 2620).

A Minute Too Late. Death is the theme of the first production in a season from the darkly humorous Théâtre de Complicité. Oct 17-29. Almeida, Almeida St, N1 (359 4404, cc).

Our Country's Good. Timberlake Wertenbaker's adaptation of Thomas Keneally's novel *The Playmaker* concerns a group of Australian convicts in 1789 preparing to stage a version of *The Recruiting Officer* (see below). In repertory with *The Recruiting Officer*. Royal Court, Sloane Sq, SW1 (730 1745, cc 836 2428).

Perrier Pick of the Fringe. *Blood Wedding*, a London première from Comunicado of Lorca's classic; *Salt of the Earth*, a new play by John Godber for Hull Truck—a humorous celebration of life in the Yorkshire coalfields; *A Matter of Chance*, a dance play adapted by Roger McGough from Nabokov's story for dance company *The Kosh*. Sept 26-Oct 5. Donmar Warehouse, 42 Earlham St, WC2 (240 8230).

The Recruiting Officer. George Farquhar's story of small-town life in Shrewsbury in 1706, as two determined women make a desperate attempt to bring their lovers to heel during an army recruiting drive. Max Stafford-Clark directs. Royai Court.

Red Magic. Richard Crane's political account of the visit to Hollywood by Eisenstein, the Russian film-maker. Oct 4-8. Museum of the Moving Image, South Bank, SE1 (928 3232).

Temporary Rupture. Michael Ellis's witty revenge drama examines how a woman responds when the man who deserted her at the altar comes visiting. A Black Theatre Co-operative production. Oct 21, 22. Cockpit Theatre, Gateforth St, NW8 (262 7907).

CINEMA

The following films are expected to be showing in London or on general release at some time during the month. Programmes often change at short notice, so please consult a local or daily newspaper for exact location & times.

Alice (PG). Surreal interpretation of *Alice in Wonderland* using puppet-animation. Made in Switzerland, though clearly much influenced by the Czech puppet tradition. Opens Oct 15. ICA, The Mall, SW1 (930 3647).

Au Revoir Les Enfants (15). Louis Malle wrote & directed this brilliant account of a tragic episode from his own childhood. Two friends at a Catholic boarding school in occupied France in 1944 find themselves at the mercy of events when it becomes apparent that one of them is Jewish. Unmissable.

Bagdad Cafe (PG). Two strong-willed women (Marianne Sägebrecht & C. C. H. Pounder) knock a dilapidated truckers' diner into shape. Opens Oct 7. Chelsea Cinema, King's Rd, SW3 (351 3742); Metro, Rupert St, W1 (437 0757); Screen on the Hill, 203 Haverstock Hill, NW3 (435 3366). REVIEW ON P86.

Big (PG). A 12-year-old boy becomes a 35-year-old man, courtesy of a carnival wishing machine, & ends up having the time of his life when he gets a job with a toy company. Penny Marshall's brisk direction & Tom Hanks's comic skill in the leading role make this a real treat. Opens Oct 21. Odeon West End, Leicester Sq, WC2 (930 5252).

Big Business (PG). Unfunny comedy about two pairs of mismatched twins, frantically hammed-up by Lily Tomlin & Bette Midler. Too much rushing around, too few gags.

Biloxi Blues (15). Mike Nichols directs Neil Simon's rites-of-passage comedy following a gang of raw recruits through basic training at Biloxi Camp,

Mississippi, in 1943. Despite the heavyweight presence of Matthew Broderick & Christopher Walken, it ends up a piece of cinematic fluff. REVIEWED SEPT, 1988.

The Deceivers (PG). More rum doings in the Raj, this time concerning an Englishman's attempt to infiltrate the murderous thuggee cult in 1825. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Shashi Kapoor, Saeed Jaffrey, Keith Michell & Helena Michell, it does not do justice to John Masters's novel on which it is based.

18 Again! (PG). Yet another variation on the *Trading Places* theme, this time starring George Burns as an 81-year-old who swaps bodies with his grandson (Charlie Schlatter) after a car crash. Cloying sentimentalism bogs down the one-liners. Opens Oct 7. Cannon, Oxford St, W1 (636 0310).

Family Viewing (15). Bleak Canadian movie about the breakdown of a family. The video set, constantly switched on, is used by director Atom Egoyan as a metaphor for erasing the past. Billed as a comedy, the humour is so black as to be impenetrable: definitely not family viewing. Opens Sept 30. Metro; Camden Plaza, 211 Camden High St, NW1 (485 2443).

Five Corners (15). Tony Bell directs Jodie Foster & Todd Graff in this film about young people growing up in the Bronx in the 60s. Opens Oct 28. Camden Plaza, 211 Camden High St, NW1 (485 2443). REVIEW ON P86.

Good Morning Vietnam (15). Madcap army-radio DJ Robin Williams uses unorthodox patter to cheer up the troops in Vietnam. Opens Sept 30. Warner West End, Leicester Sq, WC2 (439 0791, cc 439 1534). REVIEW ON P86.

Pathfinder (15). First film ever in the Lapp language & a real gem. Based on ancient legend, evil Tchude warriors stalk peaceful Lapps over the snowy wastes. Pacy & superbly acted by an amateur cast: deserves a much wider audience than it will receive.

The Running Man (18). Expensive looking futuristic adventure in which Arnold Schwarzenegger, as a convicted criminal, pits his pectorals against a squad of assassins in a pre-arranged, televised hunt. If he survives, he gets his freedom. Silly, but played with gusto. **The Seventh Sign** (15). Sub-*Omen* shocker centring on the seven signs that lead to the apocalypse, as foretold in Revelations. Surprisingly little gore (hence the 15 certificate) but creepy special effects. Stars Demi Moore, Michael Biehn & Jurgen Prochnow. Opens Oct 21. Cannon Prince Charles, Leicester Pl, WC2 (437 7003).

Stars & Bars (15). Racy, sporadically hilarious comedy adapted by William Boyd from his own novel. Daniel Day Lewis is perfect as the ex-pat trying to make a new life for himself in America, and finding his "Englishness" is not always an advantage. Opens Sept 23. Cannons Chelsea, 279 King's Rd, SW3 (352 5096); Tottenham Court Rd, W1 (636 6148).

Yeelen (PG). Sluggish, mystical adventure from Mali concerning a feud between father & son. Although it is beautifully filmed, director Souleymane Cisse fails to generate the tension necessary for the showdown.

EXHIBITIONS

OPENING

CRAFTS COUNCIL
12 Waterloo Pl, SW1 (930 4811).
Craft Classics since the 1940s: 200 exhibits by 33 craftsmen including Bernard Leach, Gordon Baldwin, Lucie Rie, Gillian Lowndes & John Makepeace. Some pieces are for sale. Oct 19-Jan 8, 1989. Tues-Sat 10am-5pm. Sun 2-5pm. £1, concessions 60p.
CUMBERLAND HOTEL
Marble Arch, W1 (262 1234).
20th-Century British Art Fair. 50 fine-art dealers offer paintings, drawings,

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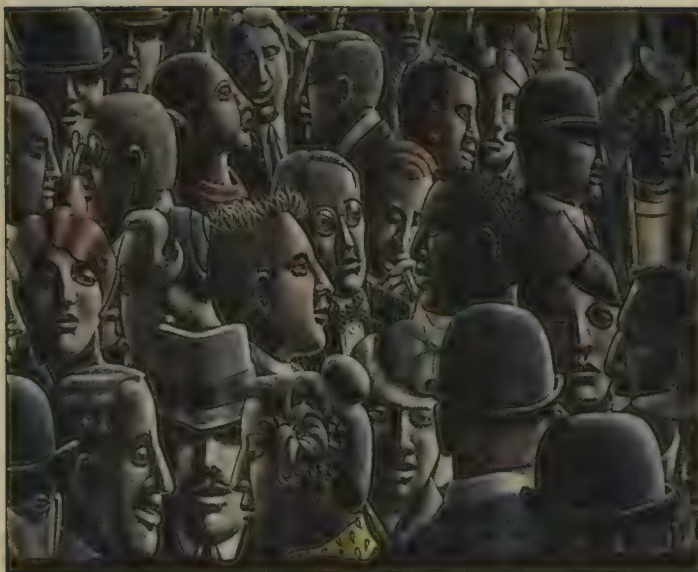
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On top form: Steve Winwood

Portal Gallery: P. J. Crook's *Money Matters* on a corrugated surface

Soho jazz star, Julia Fordham

prints & sculpture for sale. Sept 30, noon-9pm, Oct 1,2, 11am-8pm, Oct 3,4, 11am-7pm. Admission by illustrated catalogue, £5.

HAYWARD GALLERY

South Bank, SE1 (928 3144).

Eisenstein 1898-1948: His Life & Work. Coinciding with a season of his films at the National Film Theatre, this is the first major retrospective of the great Russian director's career. Drawn from Russian material previously unseen in the West, the seven displays include film stills, set models, costumes & memorabilia. Sept 29-Dec 11.

Nam June Paik: Video Works 1963-88. Korean-born Paik is one of the world's leading names working in the video medium. He also produces video-sculpture. Sept 29-Dec 11. Mon-Wed 10am-8pm, Thurs-Sat until 6pm. Sun noon-6pm. £3, concessions & everybody all day Mon & after 6pm Tues & Wed £1.50.

NATIONAL GALLERY

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (839 3321).

Art in the Making: Rembrandt. Recent analysis of Rembrandt's work has revealed new discoveries about his methods & materials. To illustrate this research, 20 of his paintings will be exhibited alongside X-radiographs & infra-red photos. Oct 12-Jan 17. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm.

PORTAL GALLERY

16a Grafton St, W1 (629 3506).

P. J. Crook. Hundreds of heads, crammed & juxtaposed at every possible angle. These intense works are fascinating. Oct 17-Nov 5. Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm. Sat 11am-2pm.

ROYAL ACADEMY

Piccadilly, W1 (439 7438).

Toulouse Lautrec: Complete Graphic Works. Between 1891 & 1901 Lautrec produced 30 posters & approximately 330 prints. Seen together, they show that life in the Parisian café-cabaret society of the 1890s could be both invigorating & depressing. Oct 14-Jan 4. Daily 10am-6pm. £3, concessions & everybody Sun until 1.45pm £2.

SAATCHI COLLECTION

98A Boundary Rd, NW8 (624 8299). **Bartlett, Fischl, Murray & Rothenberg.** Four contemporary American artists in one of the most accessible shows mounted by the gallery. Oct 14 until spring 1989. Fri & Sat noon-6pm. FEATURED ON P87.

TATE GALLERY

Millbank, SW1 (821 1313).

David Hockney: A retrospective. Colourful, provocative collection of work. Organised by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (already seen there & in New York), it includes paintings, drawings & illustrated books, as well as collaborative work in stage design. Oct 27-Jan 8.

Turner at Farnley: The Book of Birds.

20 watercolour drawings produced at Farnley Hall, Yorkshire. Included are studies of a peacock, an owl & a pigeon, each with a distinct "personality". Oct 10-Dec 11. Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2-5.50pm. £3, concessions £1.50.

WADDINGTON GALLERIES

2 & 4 Cork St, W1 (437 8611).

David Hockney: Print retrospective. Timed to coincide with the Tate's major exhibition. Oct 26-Nov 19.

Henri Matisse: Catalogue Raisonné des Oeuvres Illustrés. Over 90 graphic works—lithographs, aquatints, linocuts & etchings—to celebrate the publication of the above catalogue documenting Matisse's illustrative work. There will be a limited edition of 2,000 copies, distributed by Waddington's (£275). Sept 28-Oct 22. Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Sat 10am-1pm.

WHITECHAPEL ART GALLERY

Whitechapel High St, E1 (377 0107).

Open Exhibition. Paintings, sculpture, ceramics & videos submitted by amateurs & professionals living in East London. Sept 30-Nov 6. Tues-Sun 11am-5pm, Weds 11am-8pm.

ZAMANA GALLERY

Cromwell Gdns, SW7 (584 6612).

Contemporary Art From Western Nigeria. Flamboyant paintings depicting the ancient legends of the Yoruba people. Oct 27-Jan 8. Tues-Sat 10am-5.30pm, Sun noon-5.30pm. 50p, concessions free.

STILL SHOWING

FLOWERS EAST

199-205 Richmond Rd, E8 (985 3333).

Contemporary Portraits. With 4,500 sq ft of floor this new gallery is now the largest commercial space in London. The first show includes four new drawings by David Hockney, works by Elisabeth Frink, Lucian Freud, Anthony Green, Tom Phillips,

Eduardo Paolozzi & many others. Until Nov 12. Weds-Sun 10am-6pm.

NATIONAL THEATRE

South Bank, SE1 (928 2033).

Out of the Doll's House. Based on the BBC TV series looking at the changing roles of women in the 20th century. A feast of old photographs. Until Nov 19. Mon-Sat 10am-11pm.

ROYAL ACADEMY

Piccadilly, W1 (439 7438).

Henry Moore. Major retrospective of the work of Britain's greatest 20th-century sculptor, who would have been 90 this year. Over 180 exhibits will be laid out by decade, including the Pre-Columbian & Mexican-influenced pieces of his early years, drawings made as Official War Artist, 1939-45, & work from the 60s. Until Dec 11. Daily 10am-6pm. £3, concessions & everybody Sun until 1.45pm £2.

AFTER DARK

Please phone to confirm details

Badlands. Callow youths pose in sunglasses at this moody Gothic Punk haunt. (The cockroaches are not a gimmick!) Wednesdays. The Sanctuary, Hungerford Lane, WC2.

Club D'Afrique. Hi-life guitar & drum-heavy rhythms set the dance-floor alight at this friendly African club. Fridays. Hackney African Organisation, 18 Ashwin St, E8 (241 2720).

Revolution. New "Minneapolis Night" with the music of Prince, Rick James & Sheila E. Created to cash in on the recent success in this country of the Paisley Park Pixie (Prince). Wednesdays. Limelight, 136 Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (434 0572).

The Wag. One of London's trendiest clubs, featuring everything from House to Latin Jazz. Dress smart to get past Winston on the door. 35 Wardour St, W1 (437 5534).

JAZZ

David Bitelli Quintet. Toe-tapping contemporary jazz at this suitably decadent venue. Oct 6. Bass Clef, 85 Coronet St, N1 (729 2440).

Lol Coxhill & Dave Green, Trevor Watts & Liam Genockey. Double helping of innovative duo perform-

ances from some of the top improvisors on the circuit. Oct 4, Purcell Room, South Bank Centre, SE1 (928 3191, cc 928 8800).

Kongossa. High-energy dance-rhythms by an outfit from the French Antilles—confirming the continuing popularity of "World Music". Oct 14, 15. Bass Clef.

Cy Laurie Quartet. Legendary band leader, best known for his work with Chris Barber in the 50s, makes a comeback. Oct 2. Free. (Noon-2.30pm.) Terrace Foyer, Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, cc).

Soho Jazz Festival. Soho swings again! Spread over a number of venues—including Ronnie Scott's, the 100 Club, & marquees in Leicester & Soho Squares—& featuring everything from African to contemporary. Sept 29-Oct 9. Information: 436 2721.

Vermonten Plage. French band playing Cajun music from Louisiana. Expect a party atmosphere. Oct 8. Bass Clef.

Mac White's Ragtimers. Numbers associated with the great master of soprano sax & clarinet, Sidney Bechet (1897-1959). Oct 29, Purcell Room.

ROCK

George Dalaras. As interest in Roots Music grows, the king of *rembetika* (a kind of Greek blues) makes a rare appearance. Oct 4,5. Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Rd, W1 (580 9562, cc).

Cliff Richard. Born-again sounds on his 30th anniversary tour. Oct 4-8. Hammersmith Odeon, W6 (748 4081).

Run DMC. The world's biggest-selling rap act *rock da house*. Oct 9. Brixton Academy, 211 Stockwell Rd, SW9 (326 1022).

Bobby Vee & The Crickets. Tired 50s rock 'n' roll from the aging originals. Oct 2. Wimbledon Theatre. The Broadway, SW19 (540 0362).

The Wedding Present. Infectious "shambling" guitar-pop from last year's Indie sensations. Oct 11,12. Town & Country Club, 9-17 Highgate Rd, NW5 (267 3334).

Steve Winwood. Ex-Spencer Davis, ex-Traffic front-man, on top form with his "Roll With It" album. Sept 30, Oct 1,2. Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, SW7 (589 8212, cc 379 4444).

Almeida and Dowell dance *Ondine*

Maurizio Pollini plays Schoenberg at the Festival Hall

*Falstaff* costume design by Moidele Bickel

CLASSICS

BARBICAN HALL

EC2 (638 8891, cc).

Choir of King's College, Cambridge, English Chamber Orchestra. Stephen Cleobury conducts Handel, Bach Fauré. Oct 2, 7.30pm.

Montserrat Caballé, with the City of London Sinfonia, under Richard Hickox, sings *La mort de Cléopâtre* by Berlioz. Oct 4, 7.45pm.

Berlin Symphony Orchestra. Claus Peter Flor conducts Prokofiev, Saint-Saëns's Piano Concerto No 2, with Cécile Ousset, Dvořák's Symphony No 9. Oct 11, 7.45pm.

London Symphony Orchestra. Leonard Bernstein conducts two performances of works by Copland & by himself. Oct 12, 13, 7.45pm.

English Chamber Orchestra. Jeffrey Tate conducts Poulenc, Ravel, Stravinsky, Oct 14; Bach, Oct 29; 7.45pm.

Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra play Prokofiev, Chopin, Szymanowski, Sibelius, under Antoni Wit. Oct 17, 7.45pm.

London Symphony Orchestra. Alfred Brendel plays Beethoven's Piano Concertos Nos 1-5 under Lawrence Foster. Oct 20, 22, 7.45pm; Oct 30, 7.30pm.

FESTIVAL HALL

South Bank Centre, SE1 (928 3191, cc 928 8800).

Beethoven Plus: continuing the exploration of Beethoven's most familiar music in the context of its period & his contemporaries.

London Philharmonic Orchestra & Choir. Kurt Masur conducts two performances of *Fidelio*, with Eva-Maria Bundschuh as Leonore & Klaus König as Florestan. Oct 1, 3, 7pm.

City of London Sinfonia, London Symphony Chorus. Richard Hickox conducts Beethoven's Choral Symphony. Oct 20, 7.30pm.

Goldsmiths' Choral Union, London Mozart Players. Brian Wright conducts Beethoven's Choral Fantasia & Mass in C. Oct 28, 7.30pm.

The Reluctant Revolutionary: Arnold Schoenberg, his works & his world. Schoenberg's complete works given alongside those of related & more traditionally accessible composers.

BBC Symphony Orchestra. John Pritchard conducts Schoenberg's late opera *Moses und Aron*, with Gunther Reich as Moses & Philip Langridge as Aron. Oct 5, 7.30pm.

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Herbert von Karajan conducts Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* & Brahms's Symphony No 1. Oct 6, 7.30pm.

BBC Symphony Orchestra & Singers. Lothar Zagrosek conducts vocal works by Schoenberg & Brahms, with Brigitte Fassbaender, mezzo-soprano, & Roland Hermann, baritone. Oct 10, 7.30pm.

Maurizio Pollini, piano, plays Brahms, Schoenberg, Beethoven. Oct 22, 7.30pm.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. Pierre Amoyal is the soloist in Schoenberg's Violin Concerto, under Matthias Bamert, who combines it with Brahms's Hungarian Dances & Symphony No 4, Oct 31, 7.30pm.

Shostakovich: Music from the Flames. A retrospective covering the major compositions written in 1924-71. Opens with two concerts given by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy, with Cristina Ortiz, piano, & Yo Yo Ma, cello. Oct 16, 19, 7.30pm.

QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL

South Bank Centre.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, baritone, Hartmut Höll, piano. Three lieder recitals: Schumann, Oct 9; Schubert, Oct 12; Strauss, Oct 14; 7.45pm.

Early Music Centre Festival. A week-end of concerts devoted to the Austrian virtuosi Schmelzer & Biber; Spanish & English culture in 1588; music for Philip II, Mary & Elizabeth; & Mozart's 1788 Symphonies. Oct 21-23.

WIGMORE HALL

36 Wigmore St, W1 (935 2141, cc).

Sergei Leiferkus, baritone, **Graham Johnson**, piano. The Soviet baritone, who has made his mark in Britain on the opera stage, sings songs by Musorgsky, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, also arias by Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Rubinstein. Oct 5, 7.30pm.

Peter Schidlöf Memorial Concert. The Ensemble Amadeus pay tribute to their late colleague, with Murray Perahia, piano, in a programme of Mozart, Brahms, Beethoven. Oct 8, 7.30pm.

Nicanor Zabaleta, harp. The eminent

harpist, plays Handel, Bach, Beethoven, Granados & others. Oct 15, 7.30pm.

Consort of Musicke play works by John Blow from the time of the Glorious Revolution. Oct 18, 7.30pm.

Vogler Quartet of East Berlin, play Haydn, Bartók, Beethoven. Oct 29, 7.30pm.

OPERA

ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 3161, cc 240 5258).

Carmen. David Pountney's production, set in a 20th-century car dump, returns with Jean Rigby as Carmen, Jacque Trussel (until Sept 27)/Alan Woodrow as José, Sergei Leiferkus as Escamillo. Sept 24, 27, Oct 1, 6, 12, 15.

La traviata. Helen Field sings the title role in David Pountney's new production, with Arthur Davies & the Latvian tenor Ingus Petersen sharing the role of Alfredo, Alan Opie as Germont. Sept 29, Oct 4, 7, 13, 19, 22, 26, 29.

The Barber of Seville. Jonathan Miller's *commedia dell'arte* production, with Peter Coleman-Wright making his company début as Figaro, Della Jones as Rosina & Jeffrey Talbot as Almaviva. Oct 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 20, 27.

Simon Boccanegra. David Alden's controversial staging, with the title role sung by Malcolm Donnelly, Amelia by Janice Cairns, Gabriele Adorno by Edmund Barham, Fiesco by John Tomlinson. Oct 21, 25, 28.

NEW SADLER'S WELLS OPERA Sadler's Wells Theatre, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (278 8916, cc).

La Belle Hélène. Rosemary Ashe sings the title role in Tim Luscombe's new production, with designs by Ultz & choreography by Jenny Arnold. Oct 14, 15 (m&e), 20, 24, 26, 28, 29 (m&e).

The Gondoliers. New production by Vernon Mound, designed by Gerald Howland, with Harold Innocent as the Duke of Plaza-Toro & Linda Ormiston as the Duchess. Simon Phipps conducts. Oct 21, 22 (m&e), 25, 27, 31.

ROYAL OPERA

Covent Garden, WC2 (240 1066/1911, cc).

Das Rheingold. Yuri Lyubimov directs the prologue to a new *Ring*, designed

by Paul Herson, conducted by Bernard Haitink. Cast includes James Morris as Wotan, Ekkehard Wlaschiha as Alberich, Kenneth Riegel as Loge, Helge Dernesch as Fricka, Nancy Gustafson as Freia. Sept 29, Oct 1, 5, 8, 11, 13.

Die Entführung aus dem Serail. Conductor Jane Glover and Italian soprano Mariella Devia, who sings Konstanze, both make their company débuts in Elijah Moshinsky's production; Robert Lloyd sings Osmin for the first time. Sept 26, 28, Oct 3, 6.

Turandot. Gwyneth Jones sings the title role in Andrei Serban's production, with Franco Bonisolli as Calaf & Cynthia Haymon as Liù. Sept 27, 30, Oct 4, 7, 10, 12.

Falstaff. Peter Stein's new production for Welsh National Opera comes to London with the original cast, headed by Donald Maxwell as Falstaff, Suzanne Murphy as Alice, David Malis as Ford. Richard Armstrong conducts. Oct 24, 27, 29.

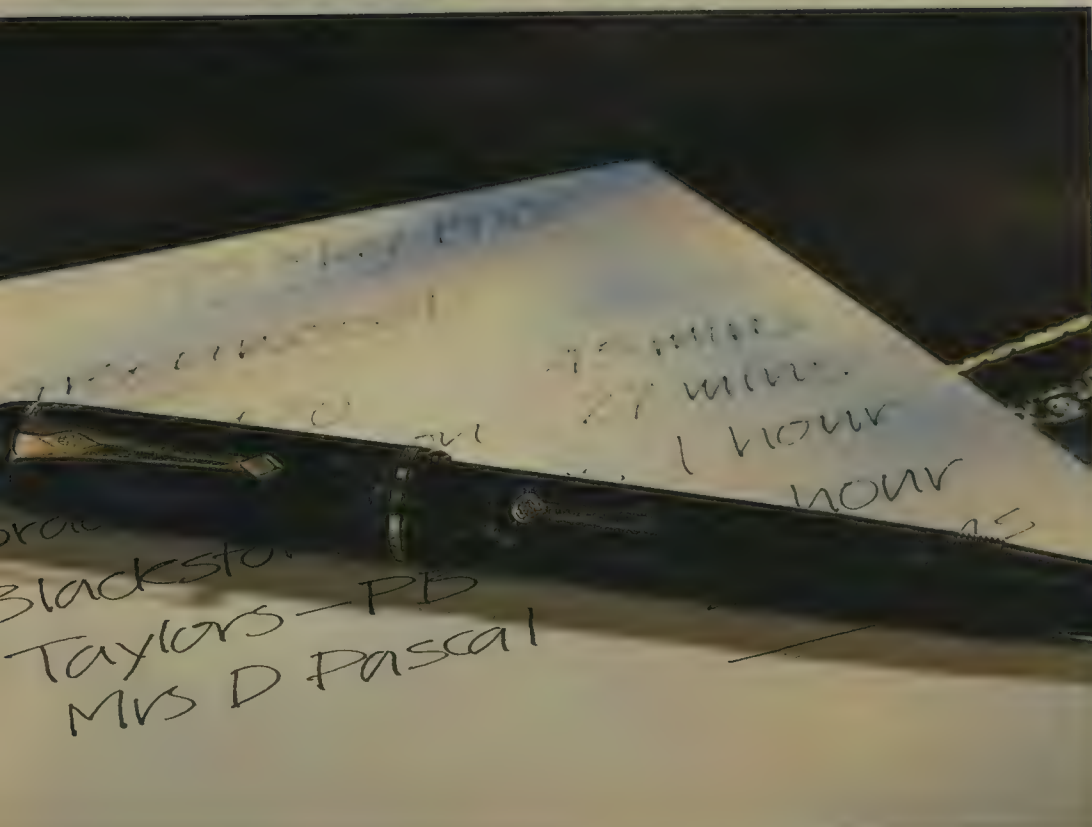
DANCE

Michael Clark & Company: *I am Curious, Orange.* Bizarre meeting of the very camp & the very punk as Clark is joined on-stage by The Fall, one of the original New Wave bands. Promises to be fast & furious. Sept 20-Oct 8. Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (278 8916, cc).

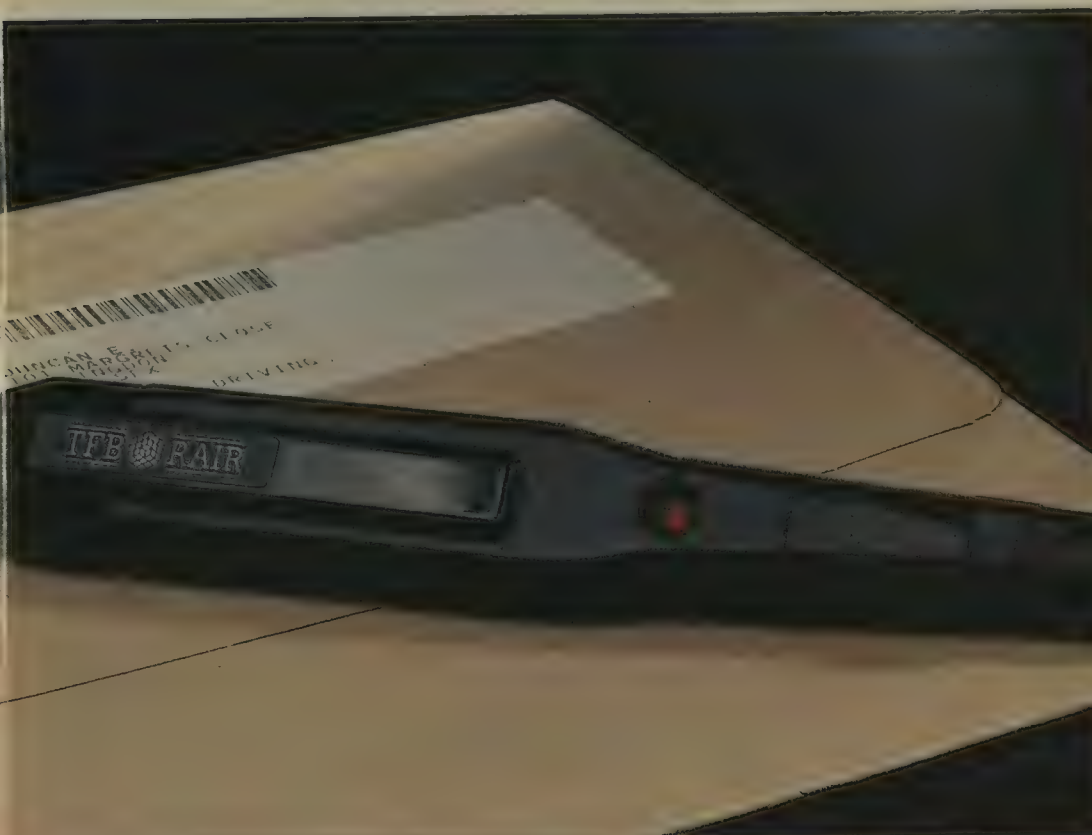
Royal Ballet. Ashton's *Ondine*, with Lila de Nobili's lush scenery & costumes. Oct 15, 18, 19, 28. Triple bill: *Rhapsody*, Ashton's one-act ballet set to music by Rachmaninov; *The Trial of Prometheus*, David Bintley's interpretation of the Greek myth with a specially-commissioned score by Geoffrey Burgon; *'Still Life' at the Penguin Café*, Bintley's up-beat piece set to music from Simon Jeffes's best-selling Penguin Café Orchestra recordings. Oct 20, 25, 26. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (240 1066/1911, cc).

Second Stride. Ian Spink premieres his new work *Dancing & Shouting*. Oct 6-8, Towngate Theatre, Pagel Mead, Basildon, Essex (0268 532632, cc); Oct 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, in *Dance Umbrella*, The Place, 17 Duke's Rd, WC1 (387 0031, cc). SEE OVERTURE P78.

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Cleaning up in Cable Street after the 1936 riots when fascists and communists clashed



Soviet plate from Nicholas II's reign on sale at Christie's

LIST OF THE MONTH

LONDON RIOTS

This month is the 20th anniversary of the Grosvenor Square Riot, when flower children protesting against the Vietnam war clashed with police outside the American Embassy. Here are a few more occasions when things have got "out of control":

1 Peasants' Revolt, 1381. Wat Tyler's mob got as far as Smithfield. The reason for their discontent? The introduction of a new Poll Tax.

2 1642 Riot. Many historians are now of the opinion that Charles I's flight to Oxford at the beginning of the Civil War was provoked by the presence of a

rampaging horde outside Parliament.
3 Gordon Riots, 1780. Anti-Catholic demonstration (instigated by Lord George Gordon) that led to a week-long riot & 500 casualties.

4 Clerkenwell Riot, 1833. Lasted ten minutes & left one policeman dead & two critically injured.

5 Dockers' Strike & March, 1887. According to a contemporary *ILN* account, this riot left every window in Whitehall smashed & led to ferocious confrontations with police in Trafalgar Square.

6 "Battle of London", 1921. Gangs of Arsenal & Spurs supporters, armed with knives & iron bars, clashed after a match; some of London's worst football violence.

7 Cable Street, 1936. Oswald Mosley's blackshirts were given a sound hiding

by anti-fascists when they marched in the streets of the East End.

8 Brixton, 1981. The most serious inner-city rioting (in terms of damage to property) the capital has seen. The first race riots occurred in Notting Hill, 1958, when more than 2,000 youths attacked black homes.

9 Stop The City, 1985. Anarchist-led, one-day protest against the "moral corruption" of British capitalism spear-headed by the City of London. Bank doors were glued-up, expensive cars damaged & workers prevented from entering offices.

10 Wapping, 1987. Precipitated by the Murdoch print-workers strike, but notable for its "unusual" police response, which included spraying rioters with dye & cavalry charges into the heart of the crowd.

OTHER EVENTS

Candlelight Charity Ball. In aid of Childline, the telephone helpline for children. Inevitably, Esther Rantzen will be there. Tickets £50, cheques payable to: Childline Charity Ball 1988, c/o Pamela Stevens Beauty Clinics, 26 Beauchamp Place, SW3. Oct 1. Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, W1 (883 4819).

Football: England v Sweden. World Cup qualifying round. Oct 19. Wembley Stadium, Middx (902 1234).

Russian Art. The large selection of porcelain & paintings from the time of Peter the Great to the early 1930s is expected to fetch around £1 million. Oct 6. Christie's, 8 King St, St James's, SW1 (839 9060).

BOOKS: THIS MONTH'S BEST SELLERS

HARDBACK NON FICTION

- 1 (1) **A Brief History of Time** by Prof Stephen W. Hawking. Bantam Books, £14.95. How the world came about.
- 2 (2) **Moonwalk** by Michael Jackson. Heinemann, £9.95. The book that tells almost nothing.
- 3 (9) **All Round View** by Imran Khan. Chatto & Windus, £12.95. Fifteen years in cricket's upper reaches.
- 4 (-) **Young Betjeman** by Bevis Hillier. John Murray, £15.95. How a protesting young man became the nation's most popular poet.
- 5 (-) **Picasso: Creator and Destroyer** by Arianna Stassinopoulos Huffington. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.
- 6 (-) **The Secret File of the Duke of Windsor** by Michael Bloch. Bantam Press, £14.95. A final (we hope) scraping of the barrel.
- 7 (5) **Leading from the Front: the autobiography of Mike Gatting** by Mike Gatting & Angela Patmore. Queen Anne Press, £12.95.
- 8 (-) **Diana: HRH The Princess of Wales** by Tim Graham. Michael O'Mara, £10.95.
- 9 (-) **Trump: The Art of Making a Deal** by Donald Trump. Century Hutchinson, £12.95. Almost nothing about how this millionaire made his fortune.
- 10 (-) **The Pirelli Calendar Album** by Michael Pye. Pavilion, £20.

PAPERBACK NON FICTION

- 1 (-) **Under the Eye of the Clock** by Christopher Nolan. Pan Books, £2.99. Winner of the 1987 Whitbread Book of the Year Award: the autobiographical story of a crippled boy.
- 2 (-) **Whale Nation** by Heathcote Williams. Cape, £8.95. An extended hymn to the whale.
- 3 (-) **West with the Night** by Beryl Markham. Virago, £4.50. Moving autobiography.
- 4 (1) **Hip and Thigh Diet** by Rosemary Conley. Arrow Books, £2.50. As if the other bits don't need watching too! Demands excessive discipline.
- 5 (-) **Grace: the secret lives of a Princess** by James Spada. Penguin, £3.95. A peek behind the scenes.
- 6 (-) **Straight on till morning** by Mary S. Lovell. Arena, £3.99. Biography of Beryl Markham the flying pioneer.
- 7 (4) **Proms Guide 88.** BBC, £1.50. Essential guide for the music lover.
- 8 (-) **When Salem came to the Boro** by Stuart Bell. Pan, £3.99. Important contribution to the Cleveland child abuse controversy.
- 9 (-) **One is Fun** by Delia Smith. Hodder, £4.95. One is more fun if one eats well.
- 10 (-) **Biko** by Donald Woods. Penguin, £4.99. Sensitive biography of a key South African figure, Steve Biko.

HARDBACK FICTION

- 1 (1) **Rivals** by Jilly Cooper. Bantam Press, £10.95. Another jaunty mixture.
- 2 (2) **To be the Best** by Barbara Taylor Bradford. Grafton Books, £11.95. Continuing the story of the indomitable Harte family.
- 3 (6) **Love in the Time of Cholera** by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Jonathan Cape, £11.45. Caribbean love story.
- 4 (4) **Summer's Lease** by John Mortimer. Viking, £10.95. The dangers of taking a Tuscan holiday villa.
- 5 (-) **Zoya** by Danielle Steel. Michael Joseph, £10.95. About a red-haired Russian in exile.
- 6 (3) **Rock Star** by Jackie Collins. Heinemann, £10.95. This particular world seems full of pop stars.
- 7 (-) **The Truth about Lorin Jones** by Alison Lurie. Michael Joseph, £10.95. A divorced art historian with a young son remembers her life.
- 8 (-) **The Sheikh and the Dustbin** by George Macdonald Fraser. Collins Harvill, £10.95. Nostalgic novel of a Highland Regiment after the Second World War.
- 9 (-) **Leader of the Band** by Fay Weldon. Hodder & Stoughton, £10.95. Lady astronomer elopes with jazz trumpeter.
- 10 (-) **The Shell Seekers** by Rosamunde Pilcher. New English Library, £12.95.

PAPERBACK FICTION

- 1 (2) **Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency** by Douglas Adams. Pan Books, £2.99.
- 2 (-) **Pearls** by Celia Brayfield. Penguin, £3.95. About three fabulous women.
- 3 (-) **Savages** by Shirley Conran. Pan Books, £3.99. As far-fetched as one could hope to find.
- 4 (-) **Fine Things** by Danielle Steel. Sphere, £3.50. A popular novelist on form.
- 5 (-) **The Radiant Way** by Margaret Drabble. Penguin, £3.95. Three Cambridge friends meet up years later & compare notes.
- 6 (-) **Moon Tiger** by Penelope Lively. Penguin, £3.99. Reflections of a dying historian brilliantly conveyed.
- 7 (-) **Not that sort of Girl** by Mary Wesley. Black Swan, £3.95. Faithful wife is also faithful mistress.
- 8 (-) **The Songlines** by Bruce Chatwin. Pan Books, £3.95. Set in aboriginal Australia.
- 9 (-) **Sepulchre** by James Herbert. Coronet, £3.50. More evil & horror.
- 10 (-) **The Hermit of Eyton Forest** by Ellis Peters. Futura, £2.99. Another delightful Brother Cadfael mystery.

Information from Book Trust.
Comments by Martyn Goff.

Brackets show last month's position.

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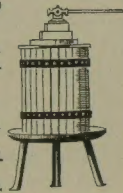
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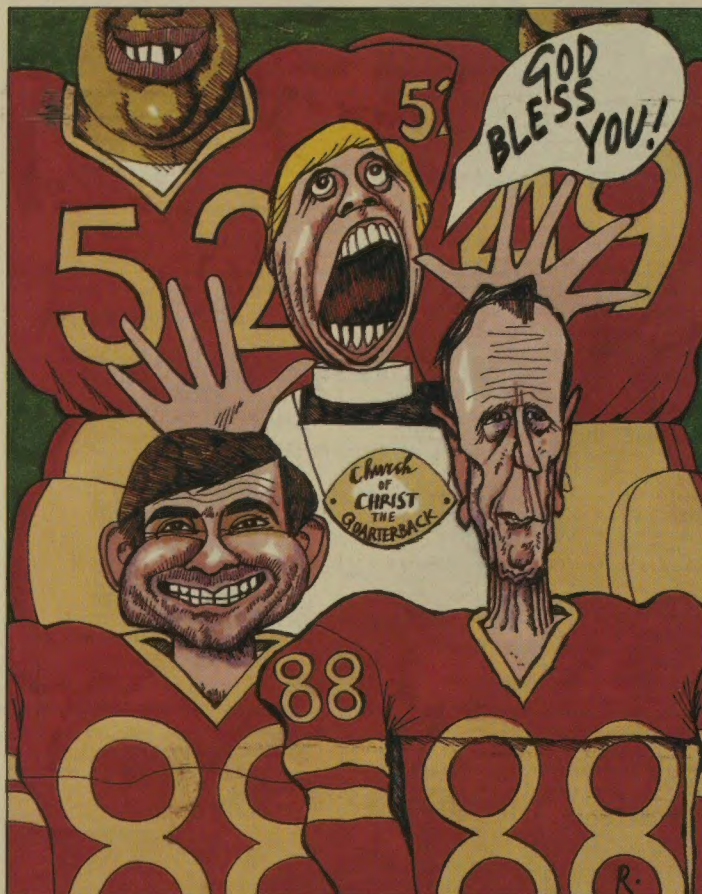
Unlike Britain, America has no official religion, although in Washington politicians and their spiritual advisers do not let that stop them from praying for special favours at election time. US Senate Chaplain Revd Richard Halverson DD, recently opened a session of that pious body with this timely request: "Sovereign Lord of history and the nations, we pray for the Senators running for reelection. . . Give wisdom to those who direct their campaigns. Give the Senators persuasiveness in speech . . . and provide wherever needed adequate campaign funds. We pray in His Name through whom Thou dost promise to supply all our needs according to Your riches in glory. Amen."

I asked Revd Halverson if his prayer for extra contributions might give unfair advantage to incumbents, most of whom have already collected millions. His reply: "Well, I *do* work for them." So much for serving two masters.

Running for elective office in America is an expensive business. Yet politicians who mix theology with fund-raising have an advantage, since the public here is pre-conditioned to give money to anybody who invokes the name of God in his sales pitch.

True, the Revds Pat Robertson and Jesse Jackson lost in the presidential primaries. But Robertson, a popular television evangelist, picked up enough cash in the process—over \$10 million—to lever his way into the top ranks of the Republican party. Jackson, on the other hand, used his ministerial skills to steal the show at the Democratic convention, forcing party officials to buy him off with a free aeroplane and a generous fall expense account. Congress's reigning economic genius, Bill Gray of Pennsylvania, practises gathering money at weekends as a Philadelphia preacher, and none of his Capitol Hill colleagues would ever think of mailing out pleas for donations and not closing with the magic words: "God bless you."

All of this religious sentiment gives the nation's capital a spiritual sense of purpose enjoyed by few other cities in America, particularly during football season, when



worshipping the Washington Redskins takes on the importance of a moral obligation. The 'Skins, as they are affectionately known, are the current champions of the National Football League. But, due to the demand for tickets, only a small percentage of their faithful fans have ever seen the team play in person; instead, most have to watch games on television, which for three hours every Sunday transforms the town into a kind of global locker-room.

Redskins games also provide a rare opportunity for Washington's most pompous pontificators to give it a rest and unwind over football. Those who happen to be friends with team-owner Canadian multi-millionaire Jack Kent Cooke (at the moment entangled in a messy divorce from an ex-coke-head young enough to be his granddaughter) are invited to watch the action from his stadium sky-suite. Regular attendees comprise a cross section of Washington's worst company: there's Nancy Reagan's lunch date, columnist George Will,

teeny-weeny Hollywood spokesman Jack Valenti, media princess Leslie Stahl, and dozens of other socio-political suck-ups, all no doubt hoping for a piece of his fortune when Cooke, 75, is called to his Final Reward.

Everybody these days wants to know how Washington works. The underlying suspicion, which always grows stronger in a presidential election year, is that it doesn't.

In fact, what the playing fields of Eton were to the Napoleonic Wars, football is to the US political system, except that the only things bruised are egos. An American football game is a muscle ballet, where the winning side pushes and shoves its opponent to defeat. A presidential election is approximately the same thing.

In campaigns past, presidential candidates ran against each other. But the real opposition was always the godless Communists, ready at any minute to first-strike the whole free world into oblivion. *Glasnost* put a stop to that, and as a result

the Russians play no part in the present campaign. That means George Bush and Michael Dukakis are being forced into a direct confrontation with one another for which neither is ready.

After eight years of Ronald Reagan and Gippermania, Bush and Dukakis both have their work cut out for them. Americans may have finally grown disenchanted with Reagan's policies, but a sizeable portion of the population still loves what Reagan stands for: God, Country and Long Vacations.

While most other people his age can't make a fist without popping a blood vessel, Reagan also stands for toughness. Proving how tough they are without having the Soviets to threaten is the biggest election challenge Bush and Dukakis face.

Bush, typecast by the Press as a country-club milktoast, has to show he's got the testosterone it takes to run the world's most powerful nation. And Dukakis, who is so little that he is barely visible in any crowd of two or more, will have to do something besides Zorba the Greek dances if he wants to convince voters he can manage America.

Meanwhile, back at the Redskins game, everyone in Jack Kent Cooke's box is taking a wait-and-see attitude, and hoping the 'Skins coach, a religious fanatic named Joe Gibbs, can keep his mind on getting the team back to the Super Bowl.

Gibbs is fuming over the most controversial movie to play Washington in years, Martin Scorsese's *Last Temptation of Christ*, in which Jesus dreams of spending quality time with Mary Magdalene in the Dead Sea Motel. So incensed was Gibbs about this cinematic sacrilege that he publicly urged Washington Christians to boycott cinemas showing the film. The request carried considerable weight, but what kept people away from the picture were probably the metal detectors that most cinemas showing it installed in their lobbies. The idea, as one cinema owner told me, was to discourage "somebody from blowing up the movie".

America may not have an official religion, but that doesn't mean Americans can't let the proper authorities know what they believe in ●



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